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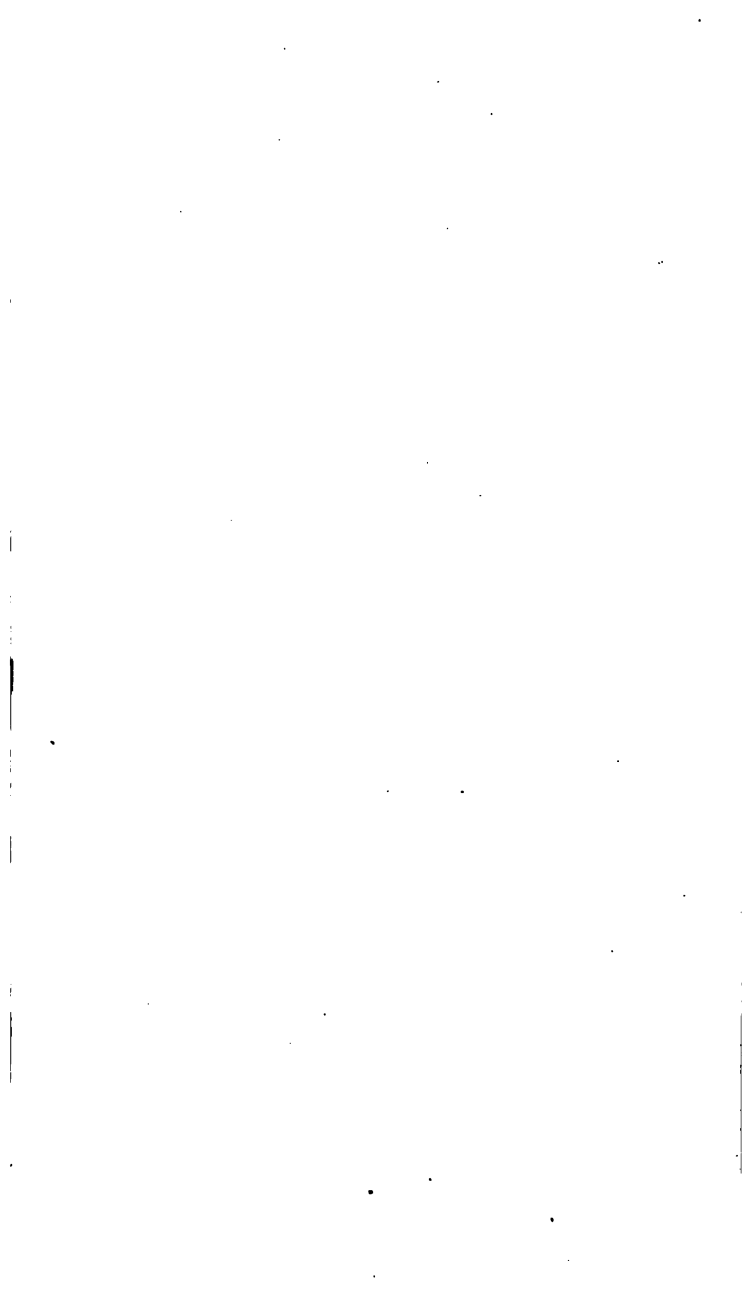
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YEMMA

Schiller

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THE
ARMENIAN;
OR,
THE GHOST SEER.



THE
A R M E N I A N;

OR,

THE GHOST SEER.

A HISTORY FOUNDED ON FACT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

F. SCHILLER,

AUTHOR OF THE ROBBERS, DON CARLOS, &c.

BY

THE REV. W. RENDER.

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THE
GHOST SEER.

LETTER V.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

JULY 1.

AS the time for our departure from Venice approaches, we are determined to employ this week in an examination of all the remarkable pictures and buildings, which is generally delayed to the last moment. They praised highly the work * of Paul Ve-

* The marriage at Cana.

VOL. II.

B

ronese,

ronese, which was to be seen in a Benedictine convent upon the Island St. George. You must not expect from me a minute description of this beautiful master-piece, from the contemplation of which I derived the most satisfactory pleasure ; but it was a sight worthy to be enjoyed longer. We should have had as many hours as minutes to study a painting of a hundred and twenty figures, which is thirty feet in breadth. It is impossible to observe the beauties which the artist has displayed in it, by just glancing at the whole. It is however a pity, that so valuable a work, which ought to adorn a place of more utility, should be buried within the walls of a convent for a few monks to gaze at. The church of this convent deserves also the attention of the connoisseur : it is one of the handsomest in the city.

Towards

Towards evening we set off for the *Giudecca*, to spend a few hours in the charming gardens that surround it. The society, which was not numerous, separated very soon; and Civitella, who had been the whole day seeking for an opportunity to speak to me in private, thus addressed me—

“ You are the friend of the Prince, and possess his confidence, as I know from good authority. When I went to-day to his hotel, I met a man upon the stairs, and immediately guessed the business he had been upon. I found the Prince, as I entered his apartments, thoughtful and dejected ”

I was about to interrupt him.

“ You cannot deny it,” he continued.
 “ I know the man, for I took very particular

particular notice of his person. Is it possible that the Prince, who has friends at Venice, to whom he is as dear as life, should in a case of necessity make use of such a wretch? Be sincere, baron!—Is the Prince embarrassed in his circumstances? You may endeavour to hide the truth, but it is in vain. What I cannot learn from you I will obtain from a man to whom every secret is a prize, and ready to be sold.”

“ What, Marquis !”

“ Pardon me. I must endure the charge of being indiscreet, to avoid the imputation of ingratitude. The Prince saved my life, and what goes far beyond that, he has instilled into my mind the principles of virtue. If I see the Prince act in a manner which must be expensive to him, and beneath his
dignity ;

dignity ; if it is in my power to assist him, I never can resist it."

" The Prince is not now in any embarrassment. Several remittances, which we expected from Trient, are, indeed, unexpectedly detained ; but accidentally perhaps, or from the idea that his departure is near at hand. This is now fixed upon ; and till then—"

He shook his head. " Do not deceive me," said he. " I mean not by doing this to diminish the obligation I owe the Prince. No, not all the riches of my uncle could repay him. I am anxious to free him from one unhappy moment. My uncle possesses a large fortune, and which I can dispose of as if it were my own. I consider it a fortunate circumstance, that the moment is arrived when I can be useful to the Prince. I know,"

he continued, " with what delicacy the Prince will treat my offer;—but on the other hand, I hope he will lay aside his prejudices, and suffer me to enjoy the satisfaction of having in some measure returned the obligation I owe to him."

He continued to urge his request till I had promised him that I would do all in my power to make the Prince accept his offer. But I knew his character, and for that reason I despaired of success. He appeared satisfied however with my promise, though he confessed that it would give him great uneasiness if the Prince considered him in the light of a stranger.

Lost in conversation, we had wandered from the company, and were just about to return, when Z*** approached us.

" I thought

“ I thought the Prince had been with you ? ”—said he. “ Is he not here ? ”

We immediately returned with him, thinking to find the Prince with the other part of the company.

“ The society is together, but the Prince is not among them,” said I; “ I really do not know how it happened that we missed him.”

Here Civitella suggested, that he might possibly have visited the adjoining church, which he had a little time before remarked for its beauty. We immediately went to seek for him there. As we approached it, we discovered Biondello waiting at the entrance. When we came nearer, we observed the Prince rush hastily out from a small door ; the agitation of his mind was im-

pressed upon his countenance. He called Biondello to him, and seemed to instruct him in the execution of some commission of consequence; his eyes were constantly directed to the gate, which remained open. Biondello hastened into the church. The Prince, without perceiving us, pushed through the crowd, and went back to the society.

It was resolved to sup in an open pavillion, and the Marquis, without our knowledge, had procured some musicians to entertain us with a concert. It was quite select; but there was among the performers a young lady who sung delightfully, and whose voice did not more enchant us than the beauty of her person. Nothing seemed to make an impression upon the Prince; he spoke little, and answered our questions confusedly; his eyes were constantly rivetted upon the spot from whence Biondello was to come;

come; and it was visible to all, that something of consequence affected his mind. Civitella asked him how he liked the church; he could not give any description of it. He spoke of several remarkable pictures, which were highly esteemed; but he had not observed them.

We perceived that our questions were unpleasant to him, and therefore we discontinued our enquiries. One hour after another past away, and Biondello did not arrive. The impatience of the Prince could no longer be concealed; he went from supper very early, and walked alone up and down the aisles of the church with agitated steps. No person could imagine what had happened to him. I did not venture to ask him the reason for such a sudden change in his disposition, as I could not now treat him with that familiarity I did formerly. With so much more impatience, therefore, did I expect the ar-

rival of Biondello, that he might explain to me the mystery.

It was past ten o'clock before he came back. The accounts which he brought to the Prince did not contribute to dissipate the gloom of melancholy. He returned to the pavilion apparently uneasy and dissatisfied. Soon after the boat was ordered, and we went home.

I could not find a single opportunity the whole evening to speak with Biondello; and I was at last obliged to go to bed without being able to satisfy my curiosity. The Prince dismissed us very early; but a thousand unpleasant reflections which tormented me kept me awake. I could distinctly hear the Prince walking up and down his chamber till a late hour; at last I dropt into a dose, but was soon roused from slumber by a person

person who appeared at my bedside with a lamp in his hand. When I looked up, I discovered it to be the Prince. He could not close his eyes, he said, and begged of me to pass the night with him. I would have risen and dressed myself, but he commanded me to remain as I was, and seated himself on my bed.

“ An extraordinary circumstance has happened to me to-day,” said he, “ and the impression it has made upon my mind will never be effaced. I went, as you must recollect, to see *** church, to which Civitella directed my attention, and which had at a distance excited my curiosity. As neither you nor he were present, I went in alone, and bid Biondello wait for me at the entrance. The church was quite dark and solitary. The aisles were cold and damp; I felt a sudden chillness steal all over me; I saw myself alone amidst the dead, in a sanctuary

where a solemn silence, as in the grave, reigned in every part. I placed myself in the middle of the dome, and gave my soul up to contemplation. Soon however the gothic beauty of the building arrested my attention. It appeared, as I examined it, more and more delightful. It called forth the powers of awful meditation. The evening bell was tolling; its hollow sound, as I heard it faintly in the aisle, overpowered me with an unusual melancholy. Some altar-pieces at a distance attracted my attention. I went nearer to view them distinctly; unperceived, I had wandered through the aisles of the church, and was approaching the end, when, by accident, I went round a pillar up a flight of steps, which lead into a side chapel, decorated with several little altars and statues of saints. As soon as I entered the chapel I heard a soft whispering, turned towards the spot from whence

I heard

I heard the voice, and about two steps from me discovered a female figure. Fright almost overpowered me; but after a few moments had elapsed I recovered, and contemplated an object which I cannot describe with justice."

" And does your Highness know for certain that it was alive—that it was not fancy—a picture of the brain?"

" Hear farther—It was a lady. Until that moment I had never regarded the sex!—The rays of the setting sun, that illumed the chapel, enabled me to observe that she was in the act of praying before an altar—Nature seemed to have lavished all her perfections on her lovely form. She was elegantly dressed in black silk, which spread around her in large folds like a Spanish rope; her long light-coloured hair burst from under the veil, and flowed in charming disorder
5 down

down her back ; one of her hands touched the crucifix, as she rested her head upon the other. But how shall I find words to describe to you the angelic beauty of her countenance ! The sun-beams played upon it, and heightened the divine expression that seemed to glow in it. Can you call back to your mind the Madona of Florence ?—She was the exact copy of the artless enchanting beauty which is so irresistibly expressed in that picture.”

Of the Madona of which the Prince speaks, the case is this : Shortly after your departure, the Prince became acquainted with a painter from Florence, who had been ordered to Venice to paint an altar-piece for a church ; his name I do not now remember. He brought with him three pictures, which he had executed for the gallery in the Canarian Palace. The subjects were a Madona, a Heloise, and a Venus in dishabille.

difficile. From the exquisite manner in which they were all painted, it was almost impossible to decide which was superior in beauty. The Prince alone did not hesitate a moment to decide; they were scarcely put before him when the Madona attracted his whole attention; in both the others the genius of the painter was admired, but this he surveyed with enthusiasm. He was so enamoured with it, that he could not be persuaded to quit it. The artist, we could perceive by his countenance, enjoyed the judgment of the Prince; he had the wit not to separate the three pictures, and demanded 1500 sequins for them. The Prince offered him half the price for the Madona. The artist insisted upon his demand, and who knows what might have happened if he had not found a purchaser for his works? Two hours after, all the three pieces were gone; and we have not seen them since.

This

This was the picture that the Prince brought to his memory.

“ I stood,” he continued, “ in silent admiration. She did not observe me; she was not disturbed by my arrival; so entirely was she lost in adoration. She prayed to her God and I to her eyes; saints, altars, or burning tapers, had never before reminded me that I was in a sanctuary; I was seized with enthusiasm. Shall I confess to you, that I believed, from that very moment, in the influence of the crucifix she held in her beautiful hand. I read our Saviour’s answer in her eyes. Thanks to her charming piety! She painted his true character to me. My ideas wandered with her’s through the ways of heaven.

“ She rose, and I stepped aside with embarrassment; the noise I made discovered me. The unexpected appearance

ance of a man alarmed her; I was fearful that my boldness might offend her; for as she glanced at me, the beautiful smiles of innocence and virtue played upon her countenance. As she rose from prayer, I was the first happy creature which offered itself to her sight.

“ In an adjoining corner of the chapel, I saw an elderly lady rise from her seat, and come towards us. I had not till then perceived her. She was but a few steps distant from me, and no doubt had witnessed all my actions. I was somewhat confused—I cast my eyes as it were involuntarily on the ground, and they rushed by me.”

“ I looked after her as she passed along the aisle. The beautiful figure was with her—What grace, what majesty appeared in all her steps! She was no longer the being that I first beheld;

held ; no, she was possessed of a thousand new charms. I followed at a distance with trembling steps, undetermined whether I should overtake her or not. I waited with impatience to see if she would bestow upon me another look ;—for the one she gave me as she passed by was lost upon me.

“ With what extreme anxiety did I expect it !

“ They stopped suddenly, but I was not able to set a foot forwards. The elderly lady, who perhaps might be her mother, observed the disorder of her hair, and immediately adjusted it.

“ That done, they approached the gate. I doubled my steps—she disappeared by degrees—I could only see the shadow of her robe as it floated in the air. A flower had fallen from her bosom,

bosom, she returned in haste to fetch it—she once more looked back and—after me!—whom else could she seek in a place so solitary? She appeared as if I was no longer a stranger to her;—but she deserted me like the flower which seemed unworthy to be replaced in her bosom. Dear F*** I am almost ashamed to own to you with what childish rapture I interpreted that look—that last expressive look, which was not perhaps designed for me!”

“ You may rely upon it, it was.”

“ It is singular,” said the Prince, after a long silence, “ that we should lament the loss of an object we never saw before—but I feel as if I exist only for her. That in a single moment man should display two such opposite characters? I look back upon the happiness I received yesterday morning with all that
exquisite

exquisite feeling with which we trace the days of childhood. This picture lives in my remembrance, and forces me to acknowledge that it is my god !”

“ Recollect, gracious Sir,” said I, “ in what gloomy thoughtfulness your mind was wrapt when this Ideal Divinity appeared to you ; the association of ideas alone inflamed your imagination. Quitting the beautiful light of day, and the tumult of the world, you were suddenly surrounded by darkness and silence, impressed with sensations which, as you confessed yourself, tended to impress you with melancholy, whilst the majesty of the structure, and the contemplation of beauty in the works of different artists, aided the train of ideas you were supporting. In the mean time, alone and solitary, you gave yourself up to reflection ; in the midst of your meditations you observe the figure of a female, where
you

you did not expect to meet a soul—still more enchanting by a fine form, which was heightened by a favourable illumination of the setting sun—a fortunate situation, and a captivating display of piety—what is more likely than that your disturbed fancy deceived you?”

“ Can memory give back impressions it has never received? In my whole country there is nothing that I could justly put in comparison with that picture. Entire and unchanged, as in the moment of beholding it, it lies in my memory; I can think of nothing but that picture—and in vain might you offer me a whole world for it!”

“ Gracious Prince, this is love.”

“ Must it then be by a name that I am to be made happy? Love!—Do not think so meanly of my feelings as to accuse me
of

of that which influences a thousand feeble souls! Who has ever felt what I endure! Such a being as I am never was in existence before! How then can you give my sensations a name? It is a new and singular suffering, originating with her that I adore.—Love! No, from love I am quite secure!”

“ You sent Biondello, no doubt, to find out the path your fair unknown pursued, and to get some information of her—What accounts did he bring you back?”

“ Biondello has discovered nothing. He found her at the church gate. An old well-dressed man (who had the appearance of a citizen from this city, and not a servant) conducted her to the boat. Some poor peasants smiled upon her as she passed them, and she rewarded them with money. By this means one of her

3

hands

hands became visible; it was ornamented with several precious stones. She said something to her companion which Biondello did not understand; he maintained it to be Greek. She had to walk a considerable distance to the canal. The people began to collect round her; so extraordinary a sight surprized all the peasants. Nobody knew her—but beauty is born a queen. All made way for her in an humble submissive manner. She let fall a black veil over her face, and hastened into the boat. To the extent of the channel of the *Giudecca* Biondello kept the boat in sight, but could not pursue its course farther, owing to the concourse of people."

"Has he not taken notice of the waterman?"

"He endeavoured in vain to find him; for it was not one of them with whom

whom he is connected. The poor people of whom he enquired could give him no other account, than that the lady for several weeks past had landed on the same spot on a Sunday evening, when she distributed some gold pieces amongst them. They were Dutch ducats, which I discovered by one that Biondello had procured."

" A Greek lady of fortune and rank, as it should seem by your description. That is quite sufficient, gracious Sir, to aid us in a discovery. But a Greek lady and in a catholic church !"

" Why not ? She may have changed her religion. But there is something in all this that we do not understand. Why does she come only once a week ? Why only on a Sunday evening, at an hour when the church is entirely deserted, as Biondello told me ?—Next
Sunday

Sunday evening must decide this. But till then, my dear friend, assist me in the difficult task of passing away the time! Days and hours will elapse in their ordinary course, but are of too long duration for a mind like mine."

" And when that day arrives—what is to be done?"

" What is to be done? I shall see her again. I shall discover who she is, and the place of her residence. Why should I be unhappy, when I know how to alleviate my sufferings?"

" But our departure from Venice, which is fixed for the beginning of next month?"

" Could I imagine that Venice contained such a treasure! I will not think of my past life, but date my existence from this hour."

I thought this a favourable opportunity of keeping my word with the Marquis. I gave the Prince to understand, that for him to continue at Venice in the present state of our finances, would by no means be proper; and that if he prolonged his stay beyond the term, he could not expect that his court would support him. I now discovered a secret which till then had been unknown to me, that he received succours clandestinely from his sister, the reigning Princess of . . . which she is very willing to increase if his court should abandon him. This sister is a pious fanatic, you know, and thinks the great savings which she makes at a very economical court, cannot be disposed of better than to a brother whose character she enthusiastically venerates. I was confident ~~some time~~ back, that there existed a good understanding between them, and many letters had been exchanged; but

but as the Prince's own resources were sufficient to defray his expences, I never once thought of this secret channel. It was now clear that the Prince had expences which were unknown to me; these still remain a secret; and if I may conclude from what I know of his character, they are not of that nature which will disgrace him. I was certain now that I had found him out. I did not therefore hesitate to make known to him immediately the offer of the Marquis, which, to my great astonishment, was accepted without any difficulty. He gave me free liberty to conduct the business with the Marquis in such a manner as I thought best, and then ordered me to dismiss the usurer, and write immediately to his sister.

It was day-break when we separated. This event has made me very uneasy for more reasons than one, particularly

that it compels us to prolong our stay at Venice. This sudden passion for the unknown lady I expect will rather be of service to him than otherwise. She will perhaps be the means of reclaiming the Prince. I hope it will affect him in the ordinary way with a slight illness, and so eradicate his prejudices.

Farewel, my dear friend. I have written this letter on the spur of the moment. The post is about to depart. You will receive this letter with the foregoing one on the same day.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

JULY 20.

THIS Civitella is one of the most serviceable men in the world. The Prince had not long left me when a note arrived from the Marquis, in which he politely reminded me of my promise. I sent him immediately a bond, executed by the Prince, for six thousand zechins; in less than half an hour it was returned, with an inclosed draught for double the sum. The Prince accepted it, but insisted that the

c 3

bond

bond should be given in return, which was only for the space of six weeks:

This whole week has been spent in enquiries after the mysterious Greek lady. Biondello put his machines in motion, but all were fruitless. He has indeed found the waterman; but he could learn nothing farther from him, than that he had set both the ladies on shore upon the Island of Murano, where two chairs waited for them. He supposed her to be an English lady, because she spoke a foreign language, and paid him in gold. He did not know her conductor, but he appeared to him to be a looking-glass manufacturer from Murano. We were now convinced that we had not to seek for her in the Guidecca, and that she was probably at home upon the Island of Murano; but the misfortune was, that from the description which the Prince gave

gave of her, she could not be known by a third person. The impassioned frenzy which seized him at the moment hindered him from observing her minutely. To that to which other people would have principally directed their attention, he was quite blind. After such a description as his, one might have sought for her in Ariosto or Tasso with more probability than upon a Venetian island. His enquiries must be made with the greatest secrecy and precaution, to prevent impeaching the virtue of the lady; and as Biondello was the only person besides the Prince who had seen her through the veil, and therefore could know her again, they sought together for her in all places where it was thought possible that she could be. The life of this good-tempered man was this week spent in traversing all the streets of Venice. In the Greek-church he made particular enquiries, but all

to no purpose ; and the Prince, although more and more impatient at every disappointment, was at last obliged to comfort himself till the next Sunday evening.

His impatience was pitiable. Nothing pleased him—nothing excited his attention. His hours were spent in anxiety and distress : he fled from society, but the evil increased in solitude. He was never more surrounded by visitors than he was this week. His departure had been announced as near at hand—all pressed themselves upon him. Being obliged to entertain those people, to avoid all suspicion, we contrived to occupy his mind in order that we might dissipate his melancholy. In this situation Civitella hit upon gaming ; and to detain the company, he proposed to stake very high. In the mean time he flattered himself that he should
tempt

tempt the Prince to play, which he thought would very soon conquer his romantic ideas. This scheme, although hazardous, they knew could not injure him, as they had it in their power to desist at any time from playing.

“ Cards,” said he, “ have often prevented me from pursuing follies which I anticipated, and relieved me from reflecting upon those I had committed.

“ The tranquillity of mind which a pair of charming eyes deprived me of, I have very often found again at the pharo-table ; and women never had half the effect upon my spirits as not being enabled to play from poverty.”

I consented, in as far as I thought Civitella might be in the right ; but the means which we instituted began soon to become more dangerous than the evil

we endeavoured to destroy. The Prince, who thought to make the game attractive by betting very high, found very soon no bounds to it. He was quite out of his element. What he did was with apparent indifference, although his actions betrayed impatience and uneasiness of mind. You know how indifferent he is about money, and now he became totally insensible of its value. Gold pieces ran away like water. He lost almost upon every card, because he played without paying any attention. He forfeited large sums, because he ventured like a desperate unfortunate man.—Dear O... I communicate this with an aching heart: in four days we had not any of the twelve thousand zechins.

Do not reproach me. I accuse myself sufficiently. But could I prevent it? Could I oblige the Prince to listen
to

to me? Could I do more than remonstrate with him? I did what laid in my power: surely I may say, that I am not guilty.

Civitella also lost. I won six hundred zechins. The unexampled misfortune of the Prince was observed by all, and for that very reason he would not abandon the game. Civitella, who likes to shew his readiness to oblige him, lent him immediately the required sums.

This scene is closed, but the Prince is indebted to the Marquis twenty-four thousand zechins. Oh how I long for the spare-money of his pious sister! If all princes acted thus, my dear friend! His Highness behaves towards the Marquis as if he had done him the greatest honour, and thus he plays his part very well.

C 6

Civitella

Civitella sought to console me, by saying, that he thought his extraordinary ill luck would powerfully assist in bringing the Prince back again to his reason.

As for the money, he was not anxious about it. He himself did not miss it—three times as much was at the Prince's service. The Cardinal also assured me, that the sentiments of his nephew were sincere, and that he was always ready to support him in them,

The worst was, that these extraordinary sacrifices did not at all affect him. One would think the Prince at least had played with some intent : but it was not so. The passion which we endeavoured to destroy seemed only to increase with bad success : when a great sum was staked, all pressed around his chair with expectation, but his eyes were

were watching for Biondello, to steal from his looks the news which he might have for him. Biondello always returned unsuccessful, and he as continually lost.

The money at last fell into very distressed hands. Some poor noblemen, who report says are supported by the alms they obtain in the market-place, came into the house perfect beggars, and left it as rich as Jews. Civitella pointed them out to me.

“ Behold,” said he, “ how many poor devils this money is of service to; how comes it then that men of wit do not direct their attention to such practices. This circumstance pleases me: it is princely. A great man may sometimes, by his errors, make people happy, and like a bounteous stream enrich

enrich the neighbouring fields by overflowing its banks.

Civitella's ideas are noble—But the Prince owes him twenty-four thousand zechins.

At last the long-expected Sunday evening arrived, and my master could not be prevented from walking in the afternoon in the *** Church. His stand was taken exactly upon the same spot in the chapel where he had seen for the first time the unknown that had captivated him, yet so that he could not immediately be seen by her. Biondello was ordered to keep watch near the church gate, and to form a connection with the attendants of the lady. I had determined to step, as by accident, into the boat at its return, to trace the unknown farther, if the first scheme should not succeed. At the

place where she was, upon the report of the waterman, landed; we hired two chairs, and the Prince commanded the chamberlain Z... to follow in a separate boat, and he himself would meet her in the church, and try his fortune there first. Civitella did not assist us, because he had already acquired a bad character with the females at Venice, and therefore he determined not to make the lady mistrust his friend by his presence. You see, my dear Count, that it could not be for want of plans, if the beautiful unknown escaped us.

Never was there offered up in a church more sanguine prayers for success, nor greater hopes created, and never was man deceived more cruelly. The Prince waited till sun-set. He trembled at every noise that approached the chapel: the creaking of every church-door increased his anxiety. Seven long
hours

hours passed, and no Greek lady arrived. I say nothing of the state of his mind. You know well what it is to be disappointed in the attainment of an object for which one has sighed seven days and nights.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

THE BARON F... TO THE COUNT
D'O...

AUGUST.

NO, my dear friend, you wrong the good Biondello. Indeed you entertain a false suspicion of him. I give up to your prejudices all Italians, but this man is honest.

You think it singular that a man of such brilliant talents, and conduct without example, should hire himself as a servant, if he had no secret ends to answer; and from that you draw the conclusion that he is a suspicious character. How! Is it then so extraordinary that

that a man of talents should make himself respected by a prince, in whose power it is to advance his fortune? Is it dishonourable to serve him? Does not Biondello clearly shew that his attachment to the Prince is personal? He has already confessed to him that he has a particular favour to ask of him, and which, when known, will undoubtedly unravel all the secret. He perhaps has entered into his service with some particular view; but may it not be innocent?

It appears strange to you that this Biondello, when you were present, did not display the great talents which he now seems to be possessed of. That is true, but he had not then an opportunity to distinguish himself? The Prince did not at that time want him, and his other qualities were discovered in him by accident.

But

But we experienced not long ago a proof of his sincerity, which will remove all your doubts. The Prince of late has been very particularly noticed. Endeavours are made to obtain a secret knowledge of his manner of life, and of his acquaintances. I know not for what reason those enquiries are made; but attend to what I shall communicate.

There is at St. George a public-house, to which Biondello often resorts. He may have some love intrigue there for aught I know. He was there for several days in the company of advocates, men in office under the government, merry brothers and old acquaintances. They were equally astonished and rejoiced to behold him again. The former friendship was renewed, and every one related his adventures since their separation; Biondello also told his. He did
it

it in a few words. They wished him joy of his new situation : they had heard of the splendid manner in which the Prince lived ; of his liberality in particular towards his people that knew how to keep a secret ; his acquaintance with the Cardinal A... was also well known ; and his partiality for gaming, &c. &c. Biondello started. They told him, that he played his part very well, but they said they knew that he was the secret messenger of the Prince. The advocates sat on each side of him, and the bottle was speedily emptied. They persuaded him to drink more : he excused himself, and said that his head would not bear much wine ; he therefore affected to be intoxicated.

“ Yes,” said one of the advocates at last ; “ Biondello may understand his business ; but he has not yet finished his lesson—he is but half a scholar.”

“ What

“ What is wanting ? ” said Biondello ?

“ He understands one art,” said the man ; “ that is, to keep a secret ; but he is not acquainted with the other, which is to get rid of it again with profit.”

“ Am I likely to find a purchaser for it ? ” asked Biondello.

The other part of the company left the room, and he remained alone with his two friends, who now came to the point. To make it short, he was to give them the means by which the Prince became acquainted with the Cardinal and his nephew, to discover to them the sources by which the Prince received, and the way he exhausted his money, and to deliver into their hands the letters which were written to the Count O... Biondello appointed to
meet

meet them, and discuss it another time ; who it was that induced them to do this he could not get from them, but concluded, from the great offers which were made to him, that it must be some wealthy person who commissioned them to entice him to this confession.

Last night he discovered to my master the whole of this affair. He was anxious to imprison the advocates ; but Biondello remonstrated, and said, if they were ever to be at liberty again, he should lose all his credit with that class of people, and perhaps his life. These sort of people all hang together, and stand up for each other. He would sooner, he said, have the high council at Venice for his enemy than be looked upon by them as a betrayer ; and he could not be so useful to the Prince, if he lost the confidence
of

of these people. We tried to conjecture with whom this curiosity might originate. Who is there at Venice that can be interested in knowing what my master receives and spends; what concerns he has with the Cardinal A... and what I write to you? Is this a scheme of the Prince . . d . . ? or is the Armenian with us again?

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

AUGUST.

THE Prince abounds in happiness and love. He has found the Greek lady. Hear how this happened.

A stranger who had travelled over Chiozza, and gave an enchanting description of that beautiful city, which is situated near the Gulph, made the Prince desirous to see it.

Yesterday his wishes were put in execution ; and to avoid all unnecessary expence, no other person attended him but Z... Biondello, and myself, as he travelled incognito. We took places
in

in a boat that usually sailed to that place with company. The society was not very select, and the voyage far from being agreeable.

Chiozza is built upon piles, like Venice, and has about forty thousand inhabitants in it. You meet there very few people of distinction, the streets are crowded with fishermen and sailors. He who wears a wig and a mantle, is called a rich man; lappels and veils are the sign of poverty. The city itself is handsome, but to admire it, you must not have seen Venice.

The waterman, who had more passengers to carry, was obliged to be quick in his return to Venice, and nothing at Chiozza particularly attracted the notice of the Prince. The vessel was full when we arrived. As the company was rather troublesome on our

passage there, we hired a separate room for our better accommodation. The Prince enquired, who were the other passengers? A Dominican, was the answer, and several ladies. My master was not at all curious to see them, and immediately went to his room.

The Greek lady was the sole object of our discourse on our passage, and it was the same on our return. The Prince repeated his adventure in the highest transports of delight; the time was passed in forming plans, and then rejecting them; till before we were aware of it, Venice was in sight. Some of the passengers left the vessel, the Dominican was amongst them. The waterman went to the ladies, who, as we now learned, had been only separated from us by a thin partition. He asked them, where he should land them. "Upon the island of Murano," was the

the answer.—“The island of Murano!” cried the Prince, as the sudden transport of joy shot through his soul. Before I could make him any answer, Biondello rushed in.

“Do you know with whom we have travelled?”—The Prince started up—

“Is she here?”

“Yes, she is,” continued Biondello. “I am just come from her conductor.”

The Prince rushed out of the room. A thousand sensations overpowered his mind. He was seized with a sudden trembling: a death-like paleness spread itself over his countenance. I burned with expectation. It is impossible for me to describe to you our situation.

The boat stopped at Murano. The Prince jumped upon the shore. She came. I perceived, from the Prince's countenance, that it was she. Her appearance did not leave any doubt of the fact. A more beautiful figure I never saw: the flattering descriptions the Prince had given of her, were fully realized. A blush of satisfaction was spread over her face, when she beheld the Prince. She must have overheard our whole conversation, and could not doubt but that she had been the subject of it. She gave her attendant a significant look, which seemed to say, 'This is he!' and with an artless embarrassment she cast her eyes upon the ground. A small board was placed from the shore to the ship, on which she had to walk. She seemed anxious to land; but although she affected timidity, it appeared to arise more from a desire to be assisted, than the danger

ger of crossing the plank. The Prince stretched out his arm to assist her. Necessity overcame etiquette. She accepted his hand, and leaped upon the shore. The sudden agitation of the Prince made him uncivil; for he forgot the other lady, who waited for the same act of politeness—And what would he not have forgotten in that moment? I at last rendered her that service, and deprived myself of the pleasure of observing how the interview, which took place between my master and the lady, affected her.

He still held her hand in his; and, I believe, without knowing that he did so.

“ It is not the first time, Signora, that—that—” He hesitated.

" I ought to remember," she lisped.

" In the church," said he.

" In the church," said she. " Yes, it was there."

" And could I flatter myself to-day—so near."

Here she drew her hand softly out of his. He recovered himself immediately. Biondello, who in the mean time had spoken with the servant, came to his assistance.

" Signora," he began, " the ladies ordered their chairs to be waiting for them at a certain time, but we have arrived here sooner than was expected. Here is a garden in the vicinity, where you may retire to avoid the tumult."

The

The proposal was accepted, and you may judge with what delight the Prince accompanied her. They remained in the garden till late in the evening. It fell to my lot, assisted by Z... to entertain the old lady, that the Prince might remain undisturbed with his beloved. He made good use of his time, for he obtained permission to pay her a visit. He is now there. As soon as he returns, I shall know more of the matter.

Yesterday, when we came home; we found the expected remittances from our court, but accompanied by a letter, which affected my master very much. He is recalled by it, and in a tone which he has not been accustomed to. He has answered it contemptuously, and intends to prolong his stay here. The remittances are just sufficient

cient to pay the interest of the capital which he owes. We look for an answer from his sister with great anxiety.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

SEPTEMBER.

THE Prince has had a quarrel with his court : all our resources from thence are cut off.

The six weeks, which were limited for my master to have paid the debt due to the Marquis are elapsed, we have received no remittances from his cousin, whom he earnestly solicited to assist him ; neither have we had any from his sister. You may easily imagine that Civitella does not remind him of his engagement ; but the faithful memory of the Prince continually

D 5

imposes

imposes upon him the idea, that he is still the Marquis's creditor. Yesterday came letters from the reigning Count.

We had just concluded a new contract with the master of our hotel; and the Prince had openly declared, that he intended to protract his stay in Venice. Without speaking a word, he gave me the letter. His eyes darted fire: to me his countenance was a sufficient indication of the contents.

Should you imagine, dear O... that they are at *** informed of all my master's connections; and that calumny has been very busy in inventing falsehoods to defame him?

They had heard with displeasure, it is said in the letter, that the Prince had not supported his former character, but had pursued a conduct which
was

was in total contradiction to his former praise-worthy manner of thinking. They affirmed, that he rioted with women, and was addicted to gaming in an extravagant manner; that he was involved in debt; that he studied physiognomy, and sought after conjurors; that he held suspicious correspondence with prelates, and that he possessed a household, which was more than his income could support. They had even been assured, that his intention was, to compleat his bad conduct by turning an apostate, and embracing the Roman Catholic religion; and, to exculpate himself from the last serious accusation, they expected he would immediately return. A banker at Venice, to whom he was directed to deliver in the amount of his debts, was authorized, immediately after his departure, to satisfy his creditors; for, under circumstances so unpleasant, they did not think

it safe to trust the money in his own hands.

What accusations! and in what an artful manner alledged! I took the letter, and read it over a second time—I endeavoured to palliate the offence, but I did not succeed.

Z... now reminded me of the secret inquiries which had been made by the Advocates. The time, the contents, all circumstances agreed. We had falsely attributed them to the Armenian. Now it was clear from whom they were derived.. Apostasy!—But whose interest can it be to calumniate my master in such an execrable manner? I fear it is a piece of mischief invented by the Prince ... d... who will follow it up, to get my master from Venice.

He

He remained silent, with his eyes fixed upon the ground. His countenance made me tremble. I threw myself at his feet.

“For Heaven’s sake, gracious Prince,” I exclaimed, “do not think of it so seriously. You shall, you will, have the greatest satisfaction. Leave the business to me. Send me there, for it is beneath your dignity to go personally to justify yourself against such vile calumnies: permit me to do it. The calumniator must, he shall, be named, and the eyes of the . . . must be opened.”

In this situation Civitella found us: he asked, with astonishment, the reason of our embarrassment. Z. . . and I were silent. The Prince, who never made any distinction between him and us, was now too much agitated in his mind to act prudently on this occasion,
and

and commanded us to communicate to him the contents of the letter. I hesitated, but the Prince snatched it from my hands, and gave it to the Marquis himself.

“ I am your debtor, Marquis,” he began, after he had finished the letter, “ but let that give you no uneasiness. Allow me but a respite of twenty days, and you shall be paid.”

“ Gracious Prince!” exclaimed Civitella, with feeling and surprize, “ do I deserve this?”

“ You did not choose to remind me of my engagement. I know your delicacy in this matter, and thank you for your liberality. In twenty days, as I said before, you shall be paid.”

“What

“ What is the meaning of all this ? ” said Civitella with anxiety. “ Explain to me this mystery. I cannot comprehend it.”

We gave him all the information in our power. He fell into a rage. The Prince, he said, must insist upon satisfaction: the offence is infamous. In the mean time, he conjured the Prince to make use of his property and credit as if they were his own.

The Marquis left us, and the Prince still continued silent. He walked with hasty steps up and down the room: something of an extraordinary nature seemed to oppress his senses. At last he stood still, and murmured incoherently—“ Wish yourself happiness—at nine o’clock he died.”

We

We looked at him with horror.

“ With yourself happiness,” he continued. “ Happiness—Did he not say so? What was it that he meant by these words?”

“ Why do you now repeat that foolish admonition?” I exclaimed. “ What has this to do with it ?”

“ I could not then understand what the Armenian meant by that expression. Now I comprehend him. Oh, it is intolerably hard to have a master over one!”

“ My dearest Prince!”

“ Who can make me experience it! —Ah ! it must be exquisite!”

He

He stopped again. There was in his countenance a wildness resembling insanity. I never before had seen him so much agitated.

“ The most miserable among the people,” he continued, “ or the next Prince to the throne ! are the same. There is but one distinction among men—to obey or to govern.”

He once more looked into the letter.

“ You have seen the man,” he continued, “ who has ventured to write thus to me. Would you salute him in the street, if fate had not made him your master ? By Heavens ! there is something wonderfully great about the wearer of a crown !”

He continued speaking in this unintelligible manner for some time, and
many

many of his words I dare not commit to paper. But the Prince has discovered to me a circumstance, which involved me in surprize and anxiety, and which may probably ere long lead to bad consequences. We were ignorant of the family-circumstances at the court of . . . until now."

The Prince answered the letter upon the spot, though I opposed it with violence, and the manner in which he has done it will, in all probability, prevent a reconciliation.

You will also be desirous, dear O. . . to hear something about the Greek lady. I can say but little upon that subject, as I am not able at present to learn any thing satisfactory concerning her. The Prince discloses nothing, because he is, no doubt, bound to secrecy, as I presume, by his word of honour. But
 she

she is not the Greek lady that we supposed. She is a German, of noble extraction. It is reported, that she has a mother of rank, and also that she is the fruit of an illicit connection, of which much was said in Europe. Clandestine pursuits, it is said, have forced her to seek refuge at Venice, and these also are the reasons why she avoids society, and secrets herself in a private dwelling, where it would have been impossible for the Prince to have discovered her. The veneration with which the Prince speaks of her, and certain traits which he observes in her conduct, seem to authorize this presumption.

He is passionately fond of her, and his attachment increases every day. In the first outset, the visits were not repeated very often; however, the second week the interval was shortened,
and

and now not a day passes without the Prince's being there. We are not able to see him sometimes for whole evenings together; and even, if he is not in her society, she is the only object that occupies his attention. His nature seems to be changed. He walks about like a madman: he is inattentive to every thing that formerly interested him.

What will be the consequence, dearest friend, I cannot imagine. The quarrel with his court has thrown my master into the degrading situation of being dependent upon an individual, the Marquis Civitella. He is at present master of all our secrets, and perhaps our fate. Will he always think so nobly as he does at present? Will this good understanding be of long duration? and is it right to give so much power and
con-

consequence to a man, let him be ever
so excellent a character ?

A letter has been dispatched to the
sister of the Prince. The issue of it I
hope to communicate to you in my next
letter. .

LETTER

LETTER X.

THE COUNT O... IN CONTINUATION.

BUT this promised letter never arrived. Three whole months passed over, before I obtained any further accounts from Venice ; an interruption which is explained in the sequel. All the letters of my friend to me had been suppressed. You may guess the situation of my mind, when I, in the month of December, obtained the following writing, which mere accident (Biondello's illness) brought to my hands.

“ You do not write. You do not answer.—Come—Oh, come upon the wings of friendship. Our hope is gone.
Read

Read this with resolution. All our hope is gone.

“ The Marquis’s wound is mortal. The Cardinal cries for revenge, and his assassins seek the Prince’s life. My master—Oh, my unhappy master! Is it come to this? Unworthy, terrible fate! We must fly like criminals from the poniards of murderers.

“ I write to you from the Convent *** , where the Prince has taken refuge. He is lying asleep upon a mattress by my side. Alas! it is the slumber of exhausted nature, which will soon again resign him to the horror of new sufferings. During the ten days that she was ill, no sleep closed his eyes. I was present at the dissection of the body. They discovered traces of poison. To-day she will be buried.

“ Alas,

“Alas, dear O... my heart is almost broken. I was witness to a scene that never will be rooted from my memory. I stood by her dying bed. She expired with divine resignation, and her last words hailed her beloved to accompany her to the throne of heaven. All our resolution forsook us; the Prince alone was firm and collected; and though he must have suffered almost beyond description, yet he had fortitude enough to refuse the pious fanatic her last prayer.

In this was inclosed the following.

TO THE PRINCE ... FROM HIS SISTER.

“THE religion which the Prince
 *** has embraced, will not let him
 want the means to continue his present
 mode

mode of life which is to be attributed to that alone. I have tears and prayers for an unfortunate, but no more benefits for one unworthy of them."

HENRIETTE.

I set off immediately, and travelling night and day, in the third week I arrived at Venice. My haste was of no consequence. I went to comfort an unhappy being; but I found one who did not want my feeble assistance.

F . . . was very ill, and was not to be spoken with, when I arrived; they gave me, however, the following note:

"Return, dear O . . . to where you came from. The Prince does not want your assistance nor mine. His debts are payed, the Cardinal consoled, and the Marquis restored. Do you remember the Armenian, who entrapped us

last year so dexterously? In his power you'll find the Prince; who has these five days attended mass."

Notwithstanding this, I waited upon the Prince, but was refused admittance. On the bed of my friend, however, I heard the following extraordinary history.

After taking my lodgings, not far from the Prince's hotel, I was obliged to wait a long time before I could speak with my friend F . . . He was indisposed with a fever, and the physician that attended him despaired of his recovery. My situation was afflicting in the extreme; for I beheld the Prince, as it were, upon the verge of a most terrible abyss, and my friend F . . . on the brink of the grave. Harassed almost to death with misfortunes, I resolved, at all events, to

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speak

ſpeak once more with the Prince ; but I found, after ſeveral ineffectual attempts, that it was in vain ; and the laſt viſit I made I was diſmiſſed with the following intimation :

“ That the Prince was not to be ſpoken to by me, and that it was alone owing to his former attachment for me that I ſtill enjoyed my liberty.”

Biondello, who told me this, added to the weight of his information, by his ſerious and ſtrongly marked countenance. I was not able to make him any answer, but felt my knees ſhake under me, and my lips quiver in a convulſive manner. I went immediately to my lodgings, and, almoſt inſenſible with apprehenſion, threw myſelf into an arm chair, and endeavoured to diſpel the gloom of anticipation that hung over me. A noiſe brought me at laſt

to myself ; I looked up and saw the physician who attended F . . . standing before me, whom I had not heard enter the room during my perplexity.

“ I like to be myself the messenger of happy news,” said he to me, “ and I come to announce to you, that your friend F . . . finds himself so much recovered, that he is able to converse without difficulty, and wishes to speak to you ; the cause of his illness seems to be entirely removed, but you must expect to see him weak, and rather low.”

I did not suffer him to proceed in his speech, but wrapt myself up in a cloak, and hastened to congratulate my friend upon his recovery, with as much satisfaction as if the welfare of millions had depended upon my walk.

“ Oh !

“ Oh ! How much have I sighed after you, my dear O . . . ! ” said he with a feeble voice, as he pressed my hand to his breast ; “ but the physician conjured me, until now, to avoid all sensations.”

I looked at him. He was lying before me the picture of death. A tear started from my eye ; I could not suppress it ; he observed it.

“ I thank you, my friend, for this sincere proof of affection ; it convinces me that my loss will not be indifferent to you.”

“ Speak not of your death,” said I, with concern, “ the physician assures me he has removed your complaint, and that in a little time you will be well again .

“ Aye,” he replied, with a deep sigh, “ he has repeatedly said so, but I think

the contrary. My internal feelings prove to me that I cannot exist long in this world."

He sunk back on his pillow. A cold sweat stood upon his forehead. His speech became fainter by degrees ; but I collected sufficient to understand, that he suspected some one had poisoned him, for that he and myself had been suspected for some time of having maliciously and secretly calumniated the Prince at court. This accounted for the cold and unfriendly treatment I had lately received from the Prince ; and the very thought of being subject to so powerful an enemy threw me into a state of melancholy. I looked back upon my conduct, and tried to recollect any circumstance that might throw some light upon the matter, but in vain. In the midst of these reflections F . . . awaked, which aroused me from
my

my lethargy. His first word was to entreat me to be secret as to what he had discovered respecting himself, and persuaded me, fearful that a similar lot would befall me, to absent myself immediately after his death from Venice. He added, with a smile,

“ See me laid in my grave first, for I wish very much to receive that last service from the hand of a friend whom I affectionately love.”

I embraced him, and bedewed his death-pale cheek with tears.

“ I forgive those,” he said, “ who are the cause of my death ; it will not be painful to me ; and, as you have not deprived me of your presence in my last hours, I owe you the greatest thanks.”

A long pause ensued ;—after that F . . . related to me as follows. I have collected into a narrative the sentences which he spoke at intervals, and added what I extorted from him by questions ; for his feebleness did not permit him to speak in a continued series. I also was often obliged to assist him on account of the defect of his memory, as far as it could be done by questions. I must be permitted to introduce him speaking here, because of all that I communicate, nothing is done by me but the chronological arrangement. I have indeed given myself the trouble to use his own language, which I am enabled to do, as I had my pocket-book always in my hand, and carefully noted down every thing which I thought would slip from my memory.

“ I begin,” said F . . . “ my story from that period, when my letters to
you

you were intercepted. By the last of them * you know, that the Prince had fallen out with his court, and had nothing more to expect from thence. His sister did not write to him, and left us for the space of two months in an anxious state of uncertainty, when the letter, which I inclosed for you last, arrived. It threw the Prince into the most horrid state of distress. His debt to Civitella was very much increased, and his expences were not in the least diminished ; and we found there was not any probability of maintaining the system much longer.—

“ I must confess to you, that at that period I seldom enjoyed a happy hour. In the most splendid entertainments I was solitary, and sunk in deep reflec-

* That from the month of September. See the foregoing.

tion. Z . . . contented himself as well as he could. If he was not obliged to be at home, from necessity, he seldom staid with me ; and if at any time I mentioned the subject of our distress to him, he never listened to me, but answered, that he did not choose to interfere in his master's concerns. I had no friend left ; and from you I received no answers to my letters. The Prince was seldom to be seen, being in general occupied with Biondello, upon the management of his intrigues. He must have had no other thought than that of visiting the Greek lady, for he had already promised four times to the Marquis to pay him ; but, instead of that, he borrowed fresh sums. You know formerly, with what strict punctuality he performed a promise ; but at that period he was completely inattentive to it.

“ It

“ It was as if every thing existed only for him, and that he had the sole right to command it. The Marquis still continued the generous uninterested friend of the Prince, who studied his wishes, before they came to maturity, and sought, with unremitting zeal, to satisfy him in every particular. In his hands, I may say, our fate rested; and yet he knew how to give his conduct such a colour, that an indifferent person would have thought his existence depended upon a single look from the Prince.

“ Thus stood the affair, when the Prince one evening came home very late from the *Bucentaur*. He brought a book with him; the contents of which he was so anxious to be acquainted with, that, during the time he was undressing, he desired me to read it out aloud to him; for Biondello,

on whom this honour was usually conferred, under the pretext of indisposition, which he had complained of for fourteen nights, had been dismissed to go to bed. At last the Prince retired to rest, and being unable to repose until the book was finished, I was obliged to sit upon the side of his bed and continue my task. He listened very attentively, as he supported his head upon his right arm.

“ The clock in the steeple of St. Mark’s church struck one,* at that instant both the candles, which stood before me upon the table, were extinguished. We heard it thunder, which in a few minutes became so violent,

* The Count O . . . has probably given here the hour in which this happened, according to our reckoning of time; in Venice, and other provinces of Italy, they begin to count the hours from *one*, at the beginning of the night.

that

that the house seemed to shake under us; quick flashes of lightning illuminated our room, and immediately all the windows and doors burst open.

“ Beware, Prince ! that thou dost not stain thy hand with blood,” cried a hollow frightful voice—Again it thundered and lightened, after which a solemn stillness reigned for some time.

“ Is this a dream?”—cried the Prince, after a pause.

“ I did not make any answer, and was in doubt whether I should quit the room or not. In the mean time, Biondello rushed in.

“ For God’s sake, what is the matter?” he exclaimed with trepidation ; but, without waiting for an answer, he took the wax candles from
the

the table, and brought them back lighted. He was half dressed, and appeared so dreadfully frightened, that I became very much alarmed for him. Observing that the Prince had not received any injury, he seemed in some measure comforted.

“The Prince asked him if he had heard any thing? He answered in the affirmative, and his relation accorded exactly with what we had heard; however, he did not see any lightning. He was not asleep, and for that reason his evidence effectually proved, that our imaginations had not deceived us. Biondello received orders to go to bed again, and the Prince commanded him to observe the strictest silence as to what he had heard and seen.

“What do you think of this?” said the Prince, as soon as he was gone.

“I must

“ I must own to you, gracious Prince, that this event has almost deprived me of my senses.

“ Confess, that you will not willingly believe it to be a miracle, because you know that I hold them in contempt.”

“ And yet I know not how to explain it in a natural way.

“ We have read strange things in the book ; how, if our fancy should have play'd us a trick ?”

But that we both heard one and the same thing, that the candles in the mean time were extinguished at the same moment, and doors and windows burst open, is certain ; and Biondello has heard the same ?

“ That

“ That might, perhaps, be explained. The windows burst open because they were not fastened ; the door from the same cause ; the pressure of the air became then stronger, and the thorough draft put out the candles.”

But the words we heard—the lightning—the thunder ?

“ I ascribe them to imagination.”

But could imagination work upon *three* different persons exactly, at the *same* time, and in the *same* manner ?

“ If all our ideas turn to the same point, why not ?—Have you never heard, that whole societies have been deceived in the same manner ? To what cause else can we ascribe the existence of so many fanatics ?”

I allow

I allow this ; but Biondello's ideas could not surely be similar to ours, and yet—

“ It is possible. Have you not heard that he was lying awake in his bed, and in all probability listened to every thing that was said. Only a thin wainscot separates his room from mine, and you, besides, read with a very loud voice ?”

I became silent, not because I was convinced, but because I did not like to contradict him ; for his countenance proved to me that he was angry at my disputing the question with him. He seemed satisfied, but the recollection of what had passed banished sleep from my eyes.

The following day was destined for a grand feast, which was given in honour

honour of the Prince of St. Benedetto. All that Venetian splendor and pleasure could invent was united here. It was to conclude with a very brilliant masquerade-ball. A valet-de-chamber, whom the Prince a short time ago took into his service, because he saved his life, remained alone at home; whilst myself and the Prince's whole household, Biondello not excepted, who forgot his complaints to join the party, went to the entertainment. The Prince was pleased with his attention so much the more, because, in spite of his indisposition, he insisted upon going in such a manner, that the greatest love for his Prince could only have induced him. In the mask of a Bramin he followed him every where, at a little distance, like his shadow. I did not suffer him to go out of my sight, because I expected something might take place, that might lead to a discovery of

of the mysterious warning we had heard the foregoing night ; to which ground I also attributed the foresight of Biondello. My conjecture was but too well founded. The croud of masks which were present, left little room in the spacious hall for the dancers ; thus, they were rather crouded. The Prince, in endeavouring to pass some one in great haste, tore a part of his garment. He was obliged to leave the hall immediately to repair the accident. Biondello conducted him into a side room, and I followed. Picture to yourself our astonishment, when we beheld, in a recess, the Greek lady and Civitella upon a sofa, in an amorous situation. Not one of us was able to utter a word. The Prince seemed thunderstruck : his eyes rolled wildly in his head, and the muscles of his face became convulsive. The couple apparently did not observe us. Before we could prevent him, the
Prince

Prince seized a dagger, which laid upon a table, and rushing towards Civitella laid him bleeding at his feet. The Greek lady ran with loud shrieks into the hall.

“ For God’s sake, save yourself gracious Prince,” exclaimed Biondello, “ lose not a moment”. At that instant he laid hold of the Prince, who was quite stupified, and hurried him away through a side-door. I hastened after them. Scarcely was the door closed, when we heard a great noise in the room. In their embarrassment they had probably forgotten to pursue us ; we therefore made our escape. The Prince wished to go to his hotel, but Biondello prevented him, and added, that he could not be secure there. The powers above * punish very
rigor-

* This expression, or, in his language, *quei in alto*, the Venetians use as a name for the tribunal
of

rigorously any one that attacks a mask; and in spite of his rank, he was in doubt whether they would not to-morrow morning send after him one of their *Fante's*,* which might have very bad consequences. He promised to conduct him to a place of security till the affair could be settled. Biondello walked before us with hasty steps; we followed him very close, and I must confess, with great dread and anxiety. The apparition played upon my fancy so much, that I saw at every step figures, which seemed to me all armed with daggers. From the prince's countenance, I easily could perceive, that he was also very much discouraged. Not one of us spoke a word. Like fugitive

of the Inquisition. A Venetian is so afraid of that word, that he makes use of it only in cases of great necessity—and speaks of this tribunal with the highest veneration and beating heart.

* An officer of this tribunal.

criminals

criminals we stole through the private passages and bye streets. We were fortunate enough to meet, near *St. Samuele*, a boat, which, to all appearance, seemed waiting for us. We stepped into it: *Biondello* commanded the boatman to row into the *Sestier* of *Castello*, and to land us near *St. Francisco della Vigna*, a Franciscan convent. We glided like lightning through the water. Houses and steeples that bordered the river soon vanished from our sight. The moon shone with beautiful splendor; and, at intervals, we heard the distant oars as they dashed into the stream; the melancholy song of the *Barcarole*.*—

I shall

* *Barcarole* are a kind of watermen. They sing for entertainment, whilst they are lying solitary in their boats, expecting customers. They know by heart many passages of the poets, and add to them music of their own composition, which they endeavour to make adequate to the words. One is heard to begin, another, who perhaps does not

I shall never forget the impression that night made upon my mind.

We arrived, at last, at the before-mentioned place ; and Biondello procured us, even at that time of night, through the means of an acquaintance, the best accommodation. We were obliged to live there in great secrecy, and I observed that the Prince deeply felt his situation. Biondello walked out in different masks to learn how the matter stood, and what the Prince had to fear ; but for many days he returned without success. At last he came into the room, about night-fall, in great agitation.

“ We must depart from hence, he cried with a trembling voice, we must

not know the first, hears, and answers him, and they seldom discontinue their song till their business calls them away.

depart

depart this moment from hence ! Your life hangs on a thread, my Prince ! The Marquis is mortally wounded ; the Cardinal has hired twelve assassins to murder you, and he who perpetrates the deed, is promised one hundred sequins ; a price which an assassin would be studious to earn, were it even to take away the life of the head of the church. They already are acquainted with our abode—we must hasten from hence as quickly as possible !”

Had not Biondello been with us, we could not possibly have escaped our fate ; but this indefatigable and attentive man assisted us always with the best advice. He brought us cloaths, as a disguise, and we hired a boat for our conveyance. Biondello entered into conversation with the waterman, and we experienced, to our astonishment, in what great danger we were placed, and

and how industrious the affaffins were to earn the hundred sequins. And suspecting that some one might be able, by the boatman, to trace our route, to deceive them, we continually changed our boat, and went a very circuitous way about.

At last we arrived at the convent . . . A friendly monk, also an acquaintance of Biondello, received us at the gate, and conducted us immediately to a room, which was retired and clean; but not furnished for the reception of a prince.

" A lady, in the last agonies of death, wishes to speak to you," said the monk the next day to the Prince.

He started as if he had suffered an electrical stroke.

" Who is she ?" he exclaimed hastily.

VOL. II.

F

" I do

“ I do not know ; I have not enquired concerning that. She has lived for two years in this convent. From whence she came is unknown. It is our duty to receive every stranger, within our walls, without first asking who they are, and from whence they come ?—We suffer every one to keep his secret, if he will not discover it to us willingly.”

The Prince seemed lost in deep reflection.

“ How long has she been ill ? ” he said at last.

“ To day is the seventh.”

“ Where is she ? I will go to her ! ”—

He followed the monk.

In

In the sick-room, my dear friend, was his Greek lady. I have forgot to mention, that he had not an opportunity to speak to her for two days previous to the unhappy masquerade-ball ; it was clear now what detained her. I myself saw her, and I am not able to describe my feelings, when I beheld the most charming creature in the creation, who was formerly the admiration of every one, now the victim of horror and disease. Upon her lovely face were marked the signs of death.—I no longer doubted, that at the ball we must have been mistaken in the person ; but the Prince, in total opposition to his former character, still entertained his doubts. This affected his sensibility to such a degree, that nothing could be equal to it. His ardent affection threw him into the most violent paroxysms of despair, when he saw the object of his heart in the arms of death ; but, in a

few minutes, the fatal scene at the ball rushed upon his mind—he turned from her with disgust, impressed with the idea that she had treated his love with scorn. His eyes sparkled with rage, and, as in agony, his limbs trembled ; but this, when he looked upon the patient innocent, was changed into sympathetic melancholy. His situation was terrible. Although she herself suffered very much, she sought to console him. This circumstance almost drove him to distraction. I tore him by force from her bed. He sat silent in our room for some time ; at last he exclaimed—

“ I am shamefully deceived ! She, whom I adored, despised me, and rioted licentiously in the arms of another.”

Gracious

Gracious Prince, be satisfied. All circumstances clearly prove, that she was lying ill here when the deed happened. It must have been quite a different person.

“ Did I not see her—I, who preserved in the sanctuary of my heart the smallest of her favours—I, who existed only for her, who thought her one and the same with myself—to be treated thus !”——

Pardon me, gracious Prince, did you not say yourself, that under such circumstances, one might be easily deceived ?

“ Did you not see her also ?”

Your rash action hindered us from observing her minutely.

“ And how came she to know that I was in the convent. The plan is finely laid to decoy me again into the net ; but it will not succeed !”

Do not mistrust her.—An unhappy affair brought us hither ; and, meeting her in such a pitiable situation, must have operated strongly upon your mind, and—

“ Will you remind me of my weakness—I believed, from the first moment, that it was a juggle ?”

Her illness a juggle ?

“ Is that impossible, after having had the experience that we have ?”

I know not how long this conversation would have lasted ; for the more I endeavoured to convince him of his error,

ror, so much the more he opposed me ; and his understanding, formerly so enlightened, did not look upon what appeared the fact as at all probable.

Biondello's arrival prevented a continuation of our discourse. He did not, however, bring news of our being safe ; yet the Prince became, in one respect, more composed. For, he said it was in several places reported, that the lady, on account of whom we had suffered so much, was no other person than a certain V . . . Hi, who was of an indifferent character, and extremely like the Greek lady. The similarity of the dress, and the darkness of the room in which they were sitting, served also to deceive us. How his beloved knew that he was in the convent, was also explained to his satisfaction. One of her footmen had discovered Biondello—
 she had often made particular inquiries

after the Prince, and having discovered his retreat, desired once more to see and speak to her beloved. Conscious of her innocence, her sufferings made a greater impression upon the mind of the Prince. He very seldom quitted her bed, and gave himself up intirely to sorrow. The cause of her dissolution will also be that of mine.—Oh ! that I might die with the tranquillity that she did ! Her patience under her sufferings, her serenity of mind, when the shadows of death surrounded her, contributed to make her more beloved than ever. Oh ! that I might be certain of such a happy death as hers ! *

This angel died by poison ; for, on the dissection of her body, at which

* This wish of my friend was fulfilled in every particular.

I was

I was obliged to be present, the clearest proofs of it were visible.*

The situation of the Prince I am not able to describe to you. I trembled for his safety; for when he saw the corpse carried to the grave, he burst into a loud hysterical laugh, and, as in a fit of madness, uttered expressions that I never wish to recollect.

Several days passed, in which nothing remarkable happened. Biondello's accounts were always the same, and the Marquis had not yet recovered from his indisposition. We did not perceive that they were at all solicitous to discover us, although, he assured us, that they had not yet given over the pursuit; and that our safety depended

* He has already mentioned this in his last letter. See the foregoing.

upon our remaining quiet ; for their revenge would not be satisfied but by blood.

For want of room, I was obliged to sleep in the Prince's apartment. It was about midnight when he came to my bedside and waked me.

“ Have you heard nothing ?” said he —I replied in the negative, for I had slept very sound, my rest having been broken the preceding night.

Has any thing happened to you, gracious sir ?

“ Had I not the proof in my hands, I should think it was a dream. It seems as if I am surrounded every where with invisible beings.—I was just on the point of falling asleep, when I was disturbed by the most enchanting music.
Whilst

Whilst I listened from whence the sound came, a genius appeared to descend through the upper part of my bed, graced with all the charms with which our painters usually represent them ; but no pencil ever portrayed such a perfection of irresistible beauty. A soft light surrounded it, and illuminated my bed. I had drawn the curtain very close. The night lamp burnt faintly, and on witnessing this apparition, I reflected upon the former prophecy, which, alas ! was so punctually fulfilled. I remained lost in astonishment and fear. With a melodious voice it spoke to me :

“ My lord and master sends thee a letter ; open and read it, but not before the first beam of the sun announces day, and conquer all disbelief ! ” —

“ He let fall a letter, and melted, as it were, into a cloud, which vanished by degrees. His disappearance was accompanied with the same agreeable music as announced his approach, and a rich perfume diffused itself around me.

The Prince shewed me the letter. It was exactly like a common letter ; only the seal consisted of several symbols, which we could not explain, and it was not directed. He put it into his pocket.

Will you not open it ?

“ To-morrow at the appointed hour.”

You believe, then, in this apparition ?

He was silent for a while.

“ Must

“ Must I not ?—Oh ! what would I give if I could but still doubt it, and persevere in that philosophy, of which I boasted so much ! Now I must give up all. I believe now in every thing ! Can I do otherwise, after what has happened to me ? ”

He slept no more that night, but conversed of ghosts and supernatural appearances ; and I soon experienced how much he inclined to believe in the possibility of them, At the appointed time he took the letter from his pocket, and, behold, there was a direction upon it ! This, although a trifle, greatly astonished the Prince ; and you may easily conceive how he was affected at the moment. He opened it. It was a mere cover ; but there was inclosed a receipt from Civitella, not only for the sums which he had lent to the Prince, but also for the interest ; and a
letter

letter from him, of which I will give you a copy; I transcribed it on account of its singularity:

“ My gracious Prince !

“ The enormity of my crime is so great, that I ask of you forgiveness, and hope your heart will not deny it, as my repose and future happiness depends upon it. You punished my imprudence, at that unfortunate ball, by a severe blow; and I, like a madman, suffered myself to be overcome by rage, and thirsted for revenge. After the abominable custom of this country, I begged of my uncle to hire a party of banditti to kill you—the saviour of my life. The thought oppresses me with horror; but you, who gave the wound, were also able to cure it, and could have done it by one word?—Oh! you, at whose command the higher powers wait, why do you fly from my weak
unpar-

unpardonable revenge, which you could have suppressed at pleasure?—Why did you send me the sums of money, which I lent you with such satisfaction, thus to deprive me of the consolation, which you at first so nobly gave me? Whilst you thought me worthy to share with you my fortune, you did not want it?—Oh! act with generosity and forgive me, for, without that, my recovery will be to me the most unhappy period of my life. I cannot excuse my temerity; no, I am not able to do it—but you will be less indignant at my conduct, if you consider that it is by education alone such a detestable self-revenge can be justified.

“Am I not by such appearances punished enough?—Alas! the recollection of it will never be rooted from my memory.

As

“ As I lay upon my bed, suffering the most excruciating pain, and the bystanders expecting my death every moment, there appeared to me a form, in a long black Tartar dress, and girded round the loins with a golden belt. It approached near to my bed : its white beard flowed upon its breast, and a penetrating frown sat upon its brow : it looked around, and immediately my attendants sunk to sleep.

“ Wretch !—It cried, with a terrible voice—who has ventured to persecute him with vengeance, who could instantly destroy thy life, if he would make use of the power which he has in his hands ?

“ I will not repeat the dreadful remonstrance, which I heard. It was a miracle that I did not expire under the agitation this appearance occasioned.

Having

Having struggled for some time in the most terrible torments, the form touched me. I was instantly free from pain, and perfectly recovered. Before me, on the table, were laying heaps of gold, for which I was obliged to give a receipt. It also desired me to ask your pardon in writing, though I did not know where to address you, and upon which my whole welfare would depend. Oh! do not refuse your compassion to a miserable wretch.—

“ When, and how, you will obtain this letter I do not know; but the spirit assured me that you would, for certain, have it.

“ Alas, gracious Prince! return to me again. For, with sincere repentance, an unworthy being will wait upon you
in

in the anti-chamber of your hotel, as soon as day breaks.

“ Your unworthy friend,

“ CIVITELLA.”

What we felt on reading that letter I need not, dear O . . . describe to you. It was an event which filled us with astonishment. The Prince did not doubt the fact; but he would not quit his haunt, without first having made all possible inquiry as to its authenticity. Biondello, who was still asleep, was called, and commissioned to inquire very cautiously into every circumstance. The voice immediately repeated,

“ Overcome your disbelief !”

Biondello crossed himself, and went off. He did not go far from the convent, for he heard from his spies, that
we

we were perfectly safe; and he soon returned with this happy news. The Prince conjured us to be silent as to what had happened, and set off immediately.

We arrived at the hotel, and found not only Civitella but also the Cardinal, who came towards the Prince, and, in the humblest manner, asked his pardon. That he forgave them willingly, and was highly satisfied to free himself from such a dangerous dilemma, is easily to be imagined. Nor did he undeceive them as to the idea, that higher powers were at his command, and that the ghost had appeared to Civitella by his desire; he only begged of them to keep it a secret. Civitella assured him that it was quite public, for the people who waited upon him knew it, and had already cried him up as a saint.

But

“ But the people were asleep, how could they discover the vision ? ” replied the Prince, with some doubt.

Yes, gracious Prince, said Civitella— but they saw the form descending into the room, and witnessed, on their recovering from their terror, my restoration. They saw me at the brink of the grave ; and to be restored so suddenly, must have excited their astonishment ; and can you blame me, that in the moment when I found myself snatched from the jaws of death. I called you, with gratitude, my benefactor ?— — You did not prohibit me to do it ; and had that been the case, I believe I should have violated your commands. Oh ! most gracious Prince ! there is no greater pain than for an uncorrupted mind to suppress the feelings of a grateful heart !—He threw himself at the feet
of

of the Prince, whilst tears burst from his eyes.

“ I have already forgiven you,” said the Prince, raising him from the ground.

But, am I beloved by you as formerly ? — Am I not unworthy of it ? He continued in tears.

“ When I forgive, I do not do it by halves,” said the Prince, embracing him.

Life now seemed to beam afresh in the Marquis. He did not even appear to have been at all ill, for he looked as healthy as ever ; but a fixed melancholy, that was discernible in his countenance, extinguished those traces of benevolence which had formerly rendered him so attractive. But by
this

this reconciliation he became quite the reverse. Elated with his success, he ran through the room in an excess of joy that indicated his happiness. After the first intoxication was over, he was overwhelmed, with an agreeable anxiety, which did not at all belong to his character, and from which one could perceive how much he felt his indiscretion. This, and the solicitude which originated with it, made him more agreeable to the Prince, and he became to him as dear as ever : he understood the smallest hint ; he sought to read in his eyes his most distant wishes, and soon learned how to regulate his conduct according to his desires ; besides, that he sufficiently understood how to give his actions an air of duty, and continually exclaimed, how much he owed to the Prince. Believing that the Prince's violence upon the night of the ball was nothing more than a punishment

nishment for his extravagancies ;—for he did not conceive that the Prince had taken the lady that was with him for his Grecian ; he now altered his mode of life, and often thanked the Prince that he had punished him so severely. He declared that he was proud of it—that he esteemed him higher than ever, and thought him more worthy of his friendship. He candidly confessed to me, that he had at that time entertained an idea, which would in the end have been his ruin. He had laid a plan to seduce the daughter of the . . . t . . io, a charming innocent girl of sixteen. He had seen her, for the first time, at mas, and her beauty impressed him with this resolution.

To gain access to the house of her parents, and to succeed in this diabolical scheme, he was obliged to court the favour of the same lady with whom

we had seen him at the ball ; because she was a near relation to the family, and could easily introduce him.—The strictness with which she was watched, would have required him to commit a chain of crimes before he could have obtained his aim. His passion was so violent, that, united with his natural imprudence, he did not hesitate to adopt the most impolite manners to accomplish his purpose. At the brink of the grave, he added, a man reflects upon all his actions in another point of view ; and even those, that formerly gave him great pleasure, and upon which he had often spoken with delight, pierced him to the very soul with horror.

Oh ! dearest friend, Civitella is, notwithstanding all his licentiousness, a noble man, and, if he commits a fault, he knows how to compensate for it, in
such

such a manner, that one must attribute it to him as a great action. From his discourse, and from his answers to my questions, I could distinctly perceive, that it was not him, but the Cardinal his uncle, who caused the banditti to pursue us so industriously ; but he generously took all upon himself, and endeavoured to prevent us from discovering the truth ! It is much to be lamented, that so superior an understanding, with such a good heart, and such an enchanting appearance, must perish upon a Venetian foil.*

It

* My friend here goes too far. Although the sciences at Venice are in a bad state, for want of encouragement, there, however, are open to an enquiring mind very considerable libraries, from which a man may gain a great deal of useful knowledge. But the case is, that they will not make use of them. And the young nobleman, who intends to fit himself for the service of the state, has to study history and politics ; a few de-

It is a singular thing, considering the bad education which the children of the nobility receive, from the most stupid and rudest sort of priests, called abbes, that he was so enlightened, or possessed of that sensibility, which gives to all his actions so much captivating interest.

I have neglected to mention, that curiosity induced us to ask the Marquis to shew us the place where he had been wounded. He opened his shirt, and, to our great surprize, we perceived that there was not any appear-

partments, which, if they are filled up, require talents and industry, and are equally useful and necessary for those whom their birth has destined for the government of the republic. Thus has my friend praised the talents of the Marquis; they seem, however, to me, to be more of a glittering nature than founded upon learning.

COUNT O . . .

ance

ance of a wound, or the smallest mark of any violence.

CONTINUATION OF COUNT O . . .

My friend exhausted himself so much by his relation, that all the powers of nature seemed suspended. My doubts were but too well founded ; he appeared to sleep, but it was that of death—My tears are sacrificed to his memory ! He was a man of fine ideas ; but from the goodness of his heart, and an unsuspecting disposition, he became so much the easier a prey to his enemies, whose dislike to him arose from his attachment to his master.

I was now left alone in a great city, possessed of no friend, to whom I could communicate my thoughts, and was obliged to take particular care not to talk with any one but upon common

topics, because I presumed, and with reason, that I was surrounded by spies, who would put a false construction upon my words, and make that a plea for poisoning me. The death of my friend had made me cautious. His earnest request, that I would quit the place, and the message that the Prince sent to me by Biondello, now preyed upon my mind with double force; my sorrow also contributed in a great measure to aid my determination. I resolved to leave Venice. I locked myself up in my room for a few days, and then forsook a city in which I had lost two beloved friends. Before I went, I sent to the Prince a card of departure.

I had travelled about sixty Italian miles, when the idea that I might possibly save the Prince, obliged me to return. I was irresistibly compelled to act in this manner; for my mind, ever

anxious for his safety, represented to me in black colours all that might befall him ; and I looked upon it as criminal not to endeavour to rescue him. Fixed in this resolution, I entered upon the execution of my plan, without once considering the dangers and difficulties which surrounded such an undertaking. I took the precaution, however, for fear of being discovered, to dismiss my faithful servant, and the only one I had taken with me. I parted from him with deep regret ; for he was the only one who had sometimes, by his compassionate fidelity, afforded me consolation. I was now obliged to go alone : but it was absolutely necessary. He was an incomparable good servant ; but he had one fault, which I could not break him of, although he had served me twenty years, and which was in opposition to every principle of my scheme.—He

could not keep a secret. What he knew, he published to the whole world, and, though he did not tell it in direct terms, his actions and behaviour betrayed it to every one he was acquainted with; if he thought well of them, and fancied they were possessed of the same goodness of heart as himself. It could not but happen that he was very often deceived, but this did not make him at all more prudent. To put unbounded confidence in every one was his maxim, from which he never departed; for he used to say, that he should feel it severely if he was suspected by any one; and for that reason he thought it would be the same to others: and that the whole world trusted him he was convinced. He believed every one that was at all reserved in his conduct, to be free from guile. If one expressly told him to be silent upon any subject, he became anxious not to let any thing
drop

drop that could betray him, which never failed to lead him into an error. For he had always in his mind, and at his tongue's end, what he should not discover, and very often repeated to himself my prohibition; and it frequently happened that he acted thus in society, and said to himself, loud and significantly, "Caspar, don't forget that your master has told you so and so—" (and immediately mentioned the thing which he ought to have kept a secret,)—"you must not chatter out what he has prohibited you to mention."

He no sooner heard that it was public, than he maintained firmly that he had told it to nobody.

This serious fault was, however, balanced by his other good qualities, which induced me to keep him. At

first I thought of dismissing him my service, as I was not accustomed to put up with such conduct. I used to practise an artifice upon him, which succeeded extremely well, as he was obliged to keep every thing he heard a secret. I related to him, at the same time, something that was unconnected with the subject, and desired him particularly, not to mention it: by that means I deceived him, and the subject I wished to be a secret was forgotten.

I did not mention to him my determination respecting him; but wrote a letter, and sent him forward with it, under the pretext of bespeaking quarters for me. He was obliged to deliver this letter to a landlord at * * *, with whom I had frequently lodged, and who knew him to be an honest man. I requested him to inform my servant that I had thrown myself into a river. I
inclosed

inclosed a bank-note, and commanded him to make the inn his home ; begging of him, at the same time, not to make any enquiries after me. To preserve appearances, and to give him an idea that it grieved me to part from him, I wrote an affectionate farewell-letter to him, and begged of him again to fulfil my last and particular request.

Poor Caspar's case was extremely hard ; but I was under the necessity of treating him in that manner. Had I told him that I was obliged to part with him, on account of my intention to travel privately, he would have sought me every where, and would have enquired of every body, whether they had seen or heard any thing of me ; my hiding place, by that means, would have been discovered, and my death the certain consequence. I was convinced that he would punctually fulfil

my last request, and it would be very easy for me to find him again when I wanted him. I begged of him to be comforted; that he would not commit suicide I was convinced; for the respect which he had for the last request of a deceased friend was uncommonly great.

I hope my readers will pardon this digression; Caspar was my faithful servant, and deserves more than this poor tribute for his gratitude!

After hesitating a considerable time, (suspicious, probably of my intention) Caspar separated from me. With the greatest emotion I looked after him until he disappeared. I was now left alone. Quite undetermined which road I should take, I departed for
On the day of my arrival, I heard that, in the evening, there was to be a masquerade-ball; and a thought struck me, which

which I immediately put in execution. I bought the habit of a Polish Jew, ornamented my chin with a large beard, coloured my eyebrows and face, and wandered thus towards Venice. The goods which I was possessed of, and my horse, I turned into money, and secreted it, with some jewels in my belt. I did not doubt my ability to play my character faithfully ; for I had been a long while in Poland, and had dealt with the Jews ; inclination too, partly, as well as necessity, induced me to learn their language, in which I was so well skilled, that I have, even by the Jews themselves, been taken for one of their tribe. I travelled the greatest part of the way on foot, and about twenty miles from Venice entered an inn, where I met poor Caspar. He was sitting in a corner of the room, and seemed totally absorbed in thought. I was anxious to avoid being seen by

G 6

him,

him, and, for that reason, was about absenting myself from the room, when he came towards me, and asked me from whence I came? This made me bolder, and I told him the place where I had passed the night before. The word was scarcely out of my mouth, when he enquired if I had not seen his master? No, I answered quickly, and reflected afterwards, how unthinkingly it was done; because it gave him to understand that both of them were known to me. But it did not strike Caspar in the same way, and this *no* induced him to sit near to me, and to relate, with the most heart-felt sorrow, the history of his master. I reminded him to fulfil the last request of his benefactor, and heard, to my astonishment, that he did not think me dead. I immediately invented a story which convinced him of the fact. He departed early the next day, and promised me that he would
faithfully

faithfully observe my request. He took an affectionate leave of me, without knowing who I was, which convinced me that I might live at Venice in security; for I hoped to render the Prince services of great consequence.

Before I arrived at Venice, I met with an accident, which had great influence on my conduct. I stopped towards night-fall at an inn, which stood by the road side. I found there a Polish Jew, who was at the point of death. He no sooner beheld me, than he addressed himself to me, and in a few minutes we entered into conversation, in which the greatest confidence was displayed. By my compassion, and the little service which I rendered him, I at last gained his utmost confidence. His illness increased; there was no hopes of his recovery. When we were alone, he called me to his bedside, and
I ex-

I experienced what astonished me beyond description.

“ I shall depart,” he said, “ very soon to Paradise, there to repose in the laps of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; but I have something of great importance, which I cannot carry with me. You have gained my confidence, and for that reason, I shall deliver it to you.”—I was obliged to swear that I would punctually perform all he required ; at the same time, he assured me, that I should be very generously recompensed for it. He went on—

“ The . . . an confederates have sent me with a letter,”—(I was obliged to take it from the lining of his cap,) “ instead of me, do you deliver it.”

How great was my astonishment, when I heard the Armenian described from

from head to foot ! He did not know who he was ; but he told me the place where he was to be found, at certain hours, so that I could not possibly mistake him ; he gave me, besides, a sign, which was unknown to any one else, and the answer of the Armenian would clearly prove him the person. He mentioned, with the greatest care, every particular several times, that I might not err. Although I did not want this precaution, I seemed to be very attentive to what he said, that he might not suspect that I had any knowledge of the Armenian. I experienced by the . . . an business a great support to my plan ; for I was anxious that they should think me the real messenger, and not suppose that this man had merely sent me. I considered I should, on that account, be trusted with greater confidence.

It

It was, for the first time in my life, that I wished for the death of a fellow creature ; but I certainly did in this instance ; for I counted upon what I knew already, and believed for certain, that I should save the Prince, as soon as I could light upon the Armenian ; and this would all have been frustrated if the Jew had lived !

He died the following day. I performed, according to his request, the last service, and departed the next day. The letter I secreted in my cap. My heart beat with joy, and I offered up my thanks to heaven for its favour. I thought I should never reach the place of my destination.

I arrived, at last, in Venice ; my heart palpitated. I took lodgings in a remote part of the city, at a small inn. Before I arrived there, however, I was
very

very much alarmed. As I stepped into a boat, I beheld Biondello in the same. I was fearful of being discovered, because I could not trust to my disguise, as there were so many sly fellows in the city; although I avoided being detected by Caspar, (who knew me so well.) But if a man studies to avoid being known, the more he acts his part, the sooner he is likely to betray himself. I was influenced by this consideration, and therefore put a good countenance upon the matter. Biondello patted my shoulder, and gave me distinctly to understand, that my preference was very dear to him. I might have given him some suspicion, if he had not disembarrassed me, by enquiring something of . . . I answered him, that he must observe, I had made secrecy my rule of conduct. Instead of being angry with me for such a reply, he was very satisfied with it. This
peculiar

peculiar conduct was very mysterious, but by degrees it cleared itself up.

To my great satisfaction I learned from him, that they were informed of my death, and believed it; for he asked me if they had found my corpse? I replied in the negative; alledging that it was impossible, on account of the ice that floated down the river—that I confirmed the report, every one will readily believe.

As soon as I arrived in the room which I had hired at the inn, I bolted the door, and opened the letter. The task was very difficult to perform; but I tried a variety of ways, and, at last, succeeded.

To my great disappointment it was written in characters, and perfectly unintelligible. I made, however, several
attempts

attempts to understand them, but in vain. I therefore copied them very exactly, in hopes, at some future time, to find the key to them. I closed the letter again, so that no traces of my having opened it could be perceived, and appeared the following day, at the appointed time, in St. Mark's Place. It was in the beginning of January ; it was crouded with characteristic masks*

* I give this note for the information of those of my readers, who are unacquainted with the manners and customs of Venice. The characteristic masks are in Venice customary, from the time of the three kings, or wise men of the East, till the great feast day, which is the most lively in the whole year. All the streets and squares are, at that time, full of masks, and principally the St. Mark's Place. They represent all sorts of characters, nations, manners, and customs. Those who speak, entertain themselves with every one who will talk with them ; they personate faithfully their adopted character, and being sometimes men of wit, afford great entertainment. You frequently see amongst them the *Improvvisatori*, who are a kind of poets, famous for impromptu's.

and

and spectators, who were enjoying the entertainment. I did not mix with them ; I was upon the watch for the Armenian. I pressed often through the croud, and sought him in every corner, but he was not to be found. I resolved to wait until night, and then return again to the appointed place upon the *Broglia*, close to the church. The first person whom I saw was the Prince. He was in a domino, but his mask, which I knew, as well as his appearance betrayed him. He stood before a pillar, upon which were a great many characters, and near him a mask dressed like a magician. The latter had a long white beard that descended to his belt, to which was attached a black rope, apparently as a symbol of his profession. In his right hand he held a stick, with which he pointed to the pillar, and seemed to explain something to the Prince, who listened very attentively. My curiosity prompted

ed me to approach nearer, but it was useless, for they spoke so low that, in the tumult, no person could hear a single word. The magician, at last, turned round and discovered me. I thought that he played his character for mere pleasure, and was entertaining the Prince with his tricks, but I was greatly mistaken. The more I reflected upon this event, the more I was convinced that it was designed for some particular purpose. The magician went leisurely away. I had made it always a rule to notice the smallest circumstance that concerned the Prince, and therefore followed him immediately: but he disappeared, and I saw the Armenian coming towards me. I gave him the sign and he answered it, bidding me, at the same time, follow him. I complied, and he conducted me into a dark street. He there unlocked the door of a house and we went together
into

into a small room. He took the letter from me, and overlooking it slightly, seemed to be satisfied with its contents. He put several questions to me on account of the . . . business, which I answered so, that I did not give the least cause to suspect me. He desired me to meet him again the next evening. He had parted from me, when he returned back, and addressed me in the Venetian language; he had before spoken, to my great astonishment, in . . . language. My genius assisted me, I shook my head, and told him, in . . . language, that I did not understand him. He smiled, and said he had forgotten himself. He was willing to remind me once more, not to mistake the appointed hour the next evening. I promised him that I would not, and he went away. This circumstance made me still more cautious, and I maintained my character so well, that, when I quit-

ted

ted it it became very difficult for me not to use the tone and manners of a Polish Jew.

The time, until the hour arrived, passed very flow ; at last it was announced by a neighbouring clock, and I went immediately to the appointed place. I found the Armenian there, who hastily conducted me to a boat. Before we quitted it I was blindfolded, and when the bandage was taken from my eyes—guess my astonishment and terror !—for I found myself in the same hall where I had witnessed the frightful appearances I have before mentioned.* It was exactly the same, but I thought the assembly were more numerous. The hall was splendidly illuminated. The horror with which I recognized the fatal chamber was very visible ; for one of

* See Vol. I. page 17.

the assembly (by his speech, I guess it must have been the Armenian, for, as they all appeared masked, it was impossible to discover them,) told me to have courage. They said also, in the Venetian language, that a Jew was a singular animal, for he blushed at every thing but what related to traffic.

The company took their seats at a long table, covered with black cloth. One of them seated himself at a little table, upon which there were pens, ink, and papers. He was probably the secretary of the society; for he questioned me very minutely respecting the letter of . . . and to every circumstance that was at all connected with it, and wrote down all my answers to his questions. I could easily guess by this, how much their success depended upon my answers; for he read them over to me, advising me, at the same time, to
 alter

alter what did not appear to me perfectly correct. I was too well prepared to drop any thing that might betray me; I had likewise time enough, as I was questioned by an interpreter, (I believe it was the Armenian himself,) to think of the best answers. They were perfectly satisfied with me, and gave me a considerable present. The secretary paid it to me. I do not know how it happened, but his mask fell from his face. He endeavoured to put it on again as quick as possible, but I already had seen that it was—Biondello. The accident seemed to operate very forcibly upon the other members.

“ This circumstance,” said they, “ must now cost the poor Jew his life, to ensure our safety; for in such cases as these we cannot depend upon honour.”

”

Damned principle ! I thought, as the sweat poured down my forehead. I had sufficiently resolution left to affect not to understand what was said ; for my attention was, to all appearance, directed to the money I had received. I heard their debates with apparent indifference, although they became so violent, that they did not at all regard me. The question was, whether they should murder me or not. It was utterly impossible for them to understand each other, the tumult was so great. The Armenian, who had remained quiet for some time, now gave a sign with his hand, and there ensued immediately a deadly silence.—This would have convinced me, had I not guessed it before, that he was the leader of this secret society. After a short pause, he began :—

“ To

“ To provide for our safety, is our first and sacred duty. To maintain it, no sacrifice would be too great; but I cannot consent, on this occasion, to put a man to death whose services have been so essential to us.—I might say, and with justice, that it would militate against our plans, and destroy that which we have so carefully cherished.”

He paused—but no one answered him. I became more composed. He proceeded.

“ And why should we kill him?—because he saw one (pointing to Biondello) unmasked!—Is he not in some measure a party concerned, and would it be possible for him, were this not the case, in the city of Venice, among so many thousand people, to find out one single person, whom he had but
H 2 just

just glanced upon?—I moreover maintain, that the love of money, which is so natural to his nation, prevented his taking his eyes from the table. Our mere dress, without the mask, is sufficient to deceive any one who has not seen us in our ordinary habits.”

They all agreed with him. Biondello did not, perhaps, recollect, that I had already seen and spoken to him in the boat; at least he would not mention it; or he might, perhaps, think I did not know him again. But to be certain of the fact, the Armenian asked me if I should be able to recognize the gentleman again, whom I saw a few minutes ago unmasked? He put the question to me in such an insinuating manner, that many would have answered—yes, to give them an idea of their powers for discrimination; but I knew too well how the business stood. I there-

fore made my answers accordingly. I affected not to know any thing of the matter ; and, as I examined the money, I innocently asked, what they particularly wished me to do ?

“ See,” said the Armenian, “ I am not mistaken ; he has not seen him !— He seemed to me too stupid to be a hypocrite, or to think of any thing but what leads to his interest.”

Several of the others made the same observation, and seemed to regret, that they had not chosen a cleverer fellow to transact their business ?

“ Those who have sent him,” (answered the Armenian) were prudent enough to see, that a task which did not require brilliant talents to execute, would have been faithfully and conscientiously performed by him ; and indeed

there is not so much treachery to be looked for in men, that only know what they see, as in many others”

Stupid people are always the most honest, added a fat gentleman, (who probably could not boast of his abilities,) and laughed at this impromptu so much, that the table, on which his belly rested, was very near falling down.

I was dismissed, after they had inquired my place of abode; and commanded me to remain there for further instructions. They conducted me again blindfolded to the canal. My joy, when I found myself alone and safe, I need not describe; but the dreadful words, that they thought my death the only means of security, still resounded in my ears.

A whole

A whole month elapsed, in which I did not advance a step nearer to the completion of my purpose, notwithstanding my activity. My dress, and the promise which I had made to the Armenian, (and by which I hoped to make some important discoveries) became now the greatest trouble to me; for it prevented me from instituting those enquiries which were necessary to aid my plans. It was impossible for me, as I was so surrounded by spies, to learn any thing that at all concerned the Prince, without the greatest hazard. From what I had heard and seen in the secret society, I could only conjecture what they intended to do with the Prince; but it was impossible for me, an individual, to destroy the fabric, which was built and guarded by so many.—I was continually reflecting upon these circumstances, which perplexed me very much. My sleep also

was interrupted by the most frightful dreams, and was more fatiguing than refreshing. My imagination often pictured to me the Prince falling from a precipice. I caught him by his cloak, but it seemed to rend into a thousand pieces, and I saw him dashed upon the ground. I saw him struggling in a rapid stream; I ran to his assistance, and was drowned with him. I carried him from a conflagration, and believed we were safe, when the flames suddenly surrounded us, and we were consumed. In short, the most horrible images, which my disturbed mind created, totally deprived me of my rest, and, I must confess, my weakness made an impression upon me the next day, that was not easily to be eradicated; although I had very little faith in dreams*.

I was

* I hope that no one of my readers will laugh at the Count O . . . 's weakness, which he himself

I was sitting one day (it was in the beginning of February, 17..) in my room, wrapt in reflection. The weather was very gloomy : flakes of snow, intermixed with rain beat against my window, as the wind howled round the house. I did not quit my room the whole day. A gentle rap at the door at last, roused me from my lethargy, and before I could speak, I saw a man standing before me with a shew-box upon his back. He asked me if I did not choose to see his raree-show ? and without waiting for my answer, he set his apparatus before me. To get rid of him quickly, I gave him a piece of money, accompanied with a polite assurance, that I had no desire to see his raree-shew. I thought he would

self so sincerely confesses. If I had observed this beforehand, I should have left out this little appendix, though I made it my duty to deliver every thing to the public as I have found it.

depart immediately, but I was very much mistaken. He first looked at me and then the money. At last he said,

“ I never had so much given me before,” and returned me the money.

“ You must have made a mistake !”

I started. I found I had given him, in my hurry, a small gold piece—certainly too great a present for my situation. He observed my embarrassment.

“ Take the money back again,” said he, “ I will not profit by your error.”

I did so ; though I would readily have given it to him, through the fear of his being a spy. At that time the smallest circumstances were to me of consequence, and which I should not have troubled myself about.—

I gave

I gave him a smaller piece. He thanked me, but entreated me very much to look into his box. To get rid of him, I was obliged to comply with his request. He opened it, and I immediately started back—I beheld several scenes of the Prince's life, (which could be known only to a very few persons,) so accurately represented, that he who had a knowledge of them, could not but recollect them. I looked significantly at the man, he disregarded me, and begged of me to see the other.—My astonishment now rose to the highest degree. I saw the figure of a Polish Jew, which exactly resembled me, with the following words under it, “The Count O . . . as a Polish Jew.”—I lost all my patience. In an angry manner I pushed the box from me ;—

“Are the agents of hell to be found every where?” I exclaimed, and stamped upon the ground.

“ Not every where,” said the shew-man, as he grasped me by the hand.

“ Who are you ?” I cried, starting with confusion.

“ Will you desert your friend ?

I stood for a moment speechless. He drew a handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped his face.

“ Do you not know your friend Seymour ?”

It was him. My joy bordered upon frenzy. At a time, when I believed myself abandoned by all, when I could not even whisper my sentiments, for fear of being overheard and discovered, I found a friend, who had ever deserved my veneration and love. No one that has not been in the same situation, can possibly have

have an idea of my sensations. Every misfortune operated upon me with double force, because I had no friend to whom I could communicate my sufferings. Now I was in possession of that valuable treasure, and pressed him with affection to my heart. After the first burst of transport was over, I begged of him to relate to me the cause which brought him hither, and what could have induced him to leave his native country?—That he never would really have followed the trade of a shew-man, was very clear to me.

“ I wished,” he began, “ as you will remember, to return to England. I travelled through Paris; and an accident obliged me to make a longer stay there than I at first intended. Several unforeseen events reduced my finances, and I was obliged, until new remittances arrived, to desist from pursuing my
my

my journey. In the mean time, I resorted to all the public places of diversion. I went one evening into a numerous society. The bottle circulated briskly, and the conversation became very agreeable.—At last a juggler came into the room, and begged to entertain us with his tricks.

“ If they are worthy to be seen,” said a noble spark, “ the society will perhaps indulge you.”

“ To prove that they are, I will shew you a specimen,” continued he, “ and let your own judgment determine, whether I shall proceed or not.”—He performed some that were not common, and which excited our admiration.

The society unanimously desired him to go on, and every new trick he produced, procured him fresh applause.

That

That he was an Englishman I immediately perceived by his accent, which made me attentive to him. It seemed to me, that his features were not unknown to me ; but I could not immediately recollect who he was. Under the pretext, that I wished to learn some of his tricks, and to countenance a countryman, I asked him to call on me next morning, and to take his breakfast with me. He came, and in a little time I discovered, that I had been intimately acquainted with him from a boy. His name was Johnson. My joy on this occasion, was equal to yours, when you discovered me. I had been educated with him. His father had been tutor at my father's. His talents, and chearful heart, had acquired him the patronage of my father, and he suffered him to be my playfellow, and constant companion. All the privileges that I enjoyed, were also bestowed

flowed upon him ; he was instructed by
 the same masters, and dressed as I was.
 I could not shew in my whole wardrobe
 a single thing, which he did not
 also possess, and frequently, I observed,
 that he excelled me. Being the only
 child, the tender love of my mother,
 (who was dead) had somewhat spoiled
 me, and I very often told the servants,
 haughtily, that I was the only heir to
 a large fortune. My prudent father em-
 ployed this method, to shew me distinct-
 ly, that from merit alone our character
 must be estimated ; and he gained his
 point by that means sooner than he
 would have done by moralizing. I
 was at first angry with him, and hated
 Johnson ; but this did not last long,
 for, on account of his polite and good
 conduct, he acquired the esteem of the
 whole family ; and, by his sincere love
 for me, I soon was conscious of his
 good qualities. We became the best
 of

of friends, and endeavoured to excell each other in affection. He discovered a talent for mechanics: As I did not suffer him to eclipse me in any thing, I also applied myself to the art; but, by his industry and perseverance, he soon excelled me in that science: I also was not so much interested with it as himself. My father let us want for nothing. He hired masters who gave us the best instructions. The most expensive instruments were also procured, and Johnson soon finished a variety of curious things. From thence he went on farther. A genius like his, was not satisfied with continuing in a beaten tract; he had a desire always to see and study something new. Mathematics, which we had often read with our tutor, who was a very clever and expert man, had discovered to him several departments of knowledge, which he now wished to acquire. He made fun-dials, he

manu-

manufactured optical glasses, besides electrical machines, and never failed to execute any thing that appeared worthy of his attention. To be brief, (for I see clearly that the recollection of my past days, and the qualities of my friend, have made me rather too loquacious,) he became soon so expert and ingenious, that he often, although a boy of fourteen years, was the object of admiration; and, on that account, he was called the little Jack of all trades. He went on thus till he attained his twenty-second year, when he, with great industry, applied himself to chemistry; in which he soon made many new and useful discoveries. About that time my father died, and he lost a friend who had never let him want for any thing, but gratified his wishes at any expence. He now determined to travel. All my persuasions to detain him were fruitless. He stood firm to his

his intention, and I could not even obtain a permission to travel with him. He even refused the considerable legacy which my father had left him. At that I became angry, for I willingly would have shared with him my whole fortune, which he knew perfectly well; but I could not prevent him from executing his purpose. He would not even accept any money from me.

“ Well then, you may go,” said I, and embraced him with unfeigned sorrow.

It is impossible for me to discover what it was that induced him to desert the man, who had acted towards him like a brother, and for whom he had the greatest regard.—I was not able to guess it. A letter which I, shortly after his departure, received from him, has discovered it to me. After a long apology

logy for his conduct, he says: "that it was impossible for him to live any longer upon the bounty of his friends." He considered my father's generosity as an act of charity—but it was a wrong idea. "He, however, would endeavour to support himself. The death of my father caused him to reflect upon circumstances that never struck him before. He would not have a second benefactor, that he might not miss him; and wished not to expose himself to the danger of losing his support, when it had become impossible for him to exist without it. And if even he had not that to fear, he should be deficient in his duty, if he expected that from another which he was able to procure for himself."—He added many other things; but this is sufficient to give you an idea of a man, who will soon acquire your esteem; of one who rather chose to wander in the world,

than

than to enjoy that rest and affluence which he could not procure by his genius. I will not detain you longer with his history, though it is very remarkable. You will be pleased more, if you hear it from himself, and I am confident he will excite your admiration and respect.*

The days which we spent together at Paris were exceedingly agreeable. We related our histories to each other, which indeed afforded a great fund of entertainment ; for, since I received that letter, I had not either seen or heard from him. He said, that he had written several times to me, but as I

* He has indeed afterwards related to Count O . . . his history, which also came to my hands with these papers. It is very remarkable ; and, should I again have any leisure time, and my readers have a desire for it, I will publish it,

SCHILLER.

never

never obtained the letters, I could not answer them.

I related to him the events which happened to me at Venice with the Prince . . . After I had finished, he suddenly jumped from his seat, and ran up and down the room, as if influenced by some extraordinary idea.

“ We shall save him ! ” he exclaimed.—

“ What, the Prince ? ”—

“ Yes, the Prince ! ” he replied firmly.

How will that be possible ?

“ My dear friend ! don’t reflect upon that at present ; it wants but one desperate attempt. I see the possibility of
the

the measure. Judging from what I have heard, there is something serious at the bottom of these tricks. Let us destroy the plans of malice, which will perhaps be the ruin of many thousands, before they come to maturity."

Suppose they have in view something more than cheating him of his money, do you not believe, that many are at work, and that resistance would be madness?

"Undoubtedly, open resistance—but let us work against them where they do not suspect us, and in a way, that they cannot perceive the machine, but only experience the effect of its operation. This, my friend we certainly are able to undertake. I am too well acquainted with the deceitful tricks in this world, which are published as wonders; and if I can do nothing more than

than merely chase away the mist from the eyes of the Prince, I may, perhaps, save him from being enveloped in their diabolical snares."

This proposition was so noble, that, although it may prove fruitless, I consented to it. When my remittances arrived, we made the best of our way to Italy. A trifling indisposition, which affected my friend, retarded our journey for a little time. Johnson requested I would dismiss my servants, and retain only one single footman, who was sufficiently faithful and prudent, not to discover any of our plans.

Johnson disguised himself and us so, that we were quite unknown; a precaution which was very necessary.—He also observed, that in our mean dress, we should be able to make more observations than otherwise, for he
main-

maintained, that they were less suspicious of the poor than the great. We took lodgings separately, at different inns,* to have a more ample field for the execution of our plans; we even went so far as to have several lodging-houses, in which we alternately resided, having first changed our dresses, and concealed our country, for we all spoke different languages with equal promptitude. By that means, dear O . . . , I succeeded in discovering you, notwithstanding your disguise."

"But how was that possible?" said I, interrupting him.

"You betrayed yourself," he replied: "I lodged in the same inn that you did, and, by accident, was put into the room over your's. If I awoke in the night, I constantly heard some one speaking in your chamber. This made

me attentive. I laid myself upon the floor of the room, and overheard, through a crack, all that you said. I soon perceived that you was talking in your sleep. You must have been disturbed very much by frightful dreams; for your exclamations were generally—Murder! Despair! Perish! Down! Down!—Several times I heard you mention the name of the Prince, and this induced me to presume that you were the man, whom I had such a great desire to see. I overheard you for several nights, and was at last confirmed in my opinion; for you spoke of things which no other person but yourself could possibly know. Has he not similar views with us, said I; knowing as I do, that he was such a trusty friend of the Prince, and loved him so much? Is he not endeavouring to be useful to the Prince in that disguise; because he has rendered

dered it impossible, by undeserved treatment, to appear in his true form.

What!—exclaimed I, full of admiration—You have been told, then, how the Prince has treated me?

More than that, he answered. You shall soon be convinced from Johnson's letters, which I will communicate to you hereafter, and then went on—

However, I did not think proper to discover myself to you, as Lord Seymour, until I was fully convinced of the fact.

I was suspicious, although it was improbable, that you were a spy in that disguise for the purpose of betraying me: I was, therefore, obliged to act with the greatest precaution. For

that reason I appeared in the character of a shew-man.

I had drawn, some time back, for my amusement, those scenes which I displayed to you, and it immediately struck me that they would be useful to me in this instance.

Left I should be deceived, which must have appeared in your conduct, I kept back your portrait until the last, which instantly gave me to understand, that I was not wrong in my conjectures.

We were some time, said Lord Seymour, without being able to accomplish any of our plans, in spite of the greatest exertions. Every evening we met together, and communicated to each other our discoveries, and planned what measures we were to take in

in future. But, although we thought ourselves adepts at invention, we never could, by any stratagem, approach the Prince.

“ A good idea must be executed, though it may be founded on a bad principle,” said Johnson, “ or all our undertakings will avail nothing, and our assistance probably arrive too late.” For that reason he wrote a note to the Prince, in which he invited him to appear alone, at the dead of the night, in a certain solitary place. He conveyed it, unperceived, into the Prince’s pocket. He had written it so artfully, that the Prince, no doubt, presumed it came from the Armenian. The desire he had to be farther acquainted with this mysterious being, from whom he had heard nothing for some time, made us certain that he would not refuse this invitation. We were not deceived ;

he came. We hired two fellows to attack him, and came past as it were by accident. Johnson was to run to his assistance. For appearance sake, he struggled with them, until they ran away at a noise made by myself and Mathias. Johnson conducted the Prince home, and we went, as quick as possible, to our lodging*.

The success of this event you will find in Johnson's letters to me. They were sent, to avoid all intercourse with him, by a faithful waterman, to whom Johnson delivered them for me, and by that means he also obtained my answers.

* I have omitted inserting this event before, which my friend, the Baron F . . . , in his relation, has slightly mentioned, because I thought this the best place for it.

COUNT O . . .

And

And those letters, added the Count O . . . I will communicate to the reader from Lord Seymour, from a French translation, which he made at my request, as I did not understand the English language.

I have only omitted that which the public is already acquainted with from the preceding pages.

Here the thread will be again united, which the death of my friend separated.

LETTER I.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

*September 17. ***

I AM not able to recover myself from what I may justly call my extravagant happiness. Friend, rejoice with me—All has succeeded to my utmost wishes, and I look forward with pleasure to the time when the Prince will be freed from his enemies. My whole plan is fixed upon, and although every thing appears in confusion, I hope, however, that time will produce the desired effect. I pity the Prince from my heart. I soon discovered how he was situated. He has a good understanding, and an excellent heart; and shame to them who have so industriously laboured to spoil both.

But

But why do I communicate to you things which you know already better than myself? You may judge of the degree in which my happiness made me quite absent.

I shall be obliged to act with more caution in future. My plans were on the point of being destroyed ; for Biondello came suddenly into my room as I was writing. It was fortunate that I heard him approaching : I had just time enough to secrete all my papers, and walk with indifference towards the window. He did not seem to take any notice of me, but took his hat and cloak and went out, probably, upon some of the Prince's errands.

But I will now tell you every thing that appears to me of consequence, that I may not again be interrupted ;

it would be impossible for me to connect my whole train of thoughts.

I conducted the Prince home, as you already know, under the pretext of protecting him. He permitted me to do it without hesitation ; for he did not seem to have recovered from his fright, into which the circumstance of meeting two ruffians, instead of the Armenian, had thrown him. He did not speak until we entered his room. He then introduced me to one of his barons and Biondello, who were in the same room, as the saviour of his life. He thanked me heartily, and told me to ask of him any favour.—I considered for some time, and at last told him, that he would shew me the highest mark of friendship, if he would keep me in his service ; for I had sometime ago lost my master, and had endeavoured, in vain, to get a new one. I gave myself

myself out for an Englishman of a good family ; I told him that my eldest brother, during my minority, spent my fortune, and forced me to the necessity of seeking for subsistence in the humiliating capacity of a servant. By the last part of my story, I hoped to excite his pity towards me ; for I am confident that we feel always more compassion for those who are reduced from affluence to poverty, than for such as from their birth are accustomed to servitude. If he sympathised with me, I could very soon claim his confidence. In that point I succeeded to my satisfaction in a short time. But what I am rejoiced at most is, that he has made me his chamberlain ; in which situation I shall often have an opportunity of being alone with him. He would not, he said, degrade the favour of his life by a livery ; and regretted only, that it was not at present entirely in his

power to make me independent of the world.

As chamberlain, I am to have a small room to myself; but this is not yet quite ready. Biondello has permitted me, for that time, to make use of his. He is very friendly towards me; and, although I acknowledge his civility for appearance sake, yet I do not trust him; for he has so much flattery and cunning about him, that I fear he has very little honesty left.

Several days after.

THANK God, I am in possession of my little room, and begin to write to you again, which was till now impossible for me to do, Biondello watched me so narrowly. I must not attribute that to the Prince, because he is never mistrustful. Yet I will not

judge harshly. I have not yet conversed with the Prince ; but as my cloaths are not come from the tailor's, I will ascribe it to that circumstance ; but if when I am equipped he thuns me, I must conclude that there is something more at the bottom of it.

One day later.

THIS morning, early, I obtained at last my dress ; and you are not able to imagine with what apparent rapture I put them on. Biondello was present, and gave me joy, on my exchanging my old cloaths for such rich ones. But whilst I rejoiced to think how I had succeeded, he believed it arose from a childish love of finery, and this, I have no doubt, made him assure me that they fitted me extremely well. I let him enjoy his error, and to confirm his opinion, I took every part into my hands,

hands, and contemplated it with a foolish pride, smiled at myself in the glass, and neglected nothing that could convey to him the idea of my being a stupid clown. To make the joke complete, I told him, that I intended now to take a walk, to shew myself to the people, which I had not courage to do in my old coat. I intend, by that manœuvre, to send you my first letter, and I am sorry if you have been at all embarrassed on my account.

LET-

LETTER II.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

October 1,

BIONDELLO is the most cunning fox in the world; but I have, in spite of his ingenuity, deceived him. By the confidence which he seems to put in me, he watches me so closely, that if I had not taken great care, I should certainly have betrayed myself; but I have at last made him believe that I am a perfect unsuspecting blockhead, and indeed it is the opinion that I wish him to have of me, in my present situation. He studied to find out in me more than I chose to let him know; and the trouble he gave himself to accomplish this, is a sure proof that in him there is something more than the mere secretary of the Prince. The
Prince

Prince has a very high opinion of him. He does not consider him as his servant, but his trusty friend. I pretended not to understand a word of the Venetian language (and Biondello thinks he is quite sure of it, for he has tried many experiments to prove the fact), and all those who do not speak English, I converse with in French; they are not at all suspicious of me, but often talk about things when I am present, which, if they knew I understood them, they would certainly conceal from me. As they look upon me to be of no consequence in opposition to their schemes, and the Prince likes me to be about his person, I now constantly attend him, and he enjoys the advantage, as he supposes, of not being obliged to send me out of the room if he is conversing with any one, which he is always obliged to do with his
other

other servants, as they understand the language.

Last night, as I was undressing him in his room, Biondello was present. After conversing upon some indifferent topics, they began about me. Biondello thought my qualities were stupidity, sincerity, and honesty. The Prince said that he was pleased with my person, and thought the qualities Biondello spoke of were better than good intellects, united with a bad heart.

“ He is also courageous,” said he, “ and to that I owe my life, at least my freedom.”—

Biondello understood this hint. He altered his tone immediately; for, at first, he was very satirical. He might have forgotten himself. He now talked a great deal about me, and said many hand-

handsome things of me to flatter the Prince. From that they turned to the subject of the attack made upon the Prince, and cracked their brains for a long time to discover the person who hired the bravos to murder him. That the note did not come from the Armenian, Biondello maintained, for it was not likely, that if he meant to attempt the Prince's life, he would execute his plans with such temerity. The Prince agreed with him, and the only doubt then remaining was, who could possibly have views upon his person, if it was not him, who had already given him to understand so. Biondello pointed out to him the possibility, that his own court had done it to lay hold of him. It immediately struck the Prince so forcibly, that he broke out into a most violent passion. It is true all circumstances united, serve to strengthen this supposition; for I learned by the

con-

conversation, that the Prince had lately received a very rigorous letter from thence ; and Biondello reminded him of the conversation which passed at St. George.* This circumstance apparently confirmed the fact in the Prince's mind. His expressions I will not repeat here. I do not know if I am wrong, but it seemed to me as if Biondello was pleased with the idea, that the Prince despised his court : for he knew the kind of language that would increase the Prince's anger, without letting him suspect his cunning. This man possesses dexterity sufficient to guide any person where he pleases, without his being able to perceive the thread with which he leads him. He sometimes appears quite different to that which you would suspect. Towards me he did not always act with such

* See the precepling part of this Vol. page 43.

precaution ; for that reason I discovered more of his character than I otherwise could have done. He had strict orders from that hour to have his wits about him, and also to intercept the letters of Baron F . . . (a cavalier of the Prince's household) to Count O . . . to see if they would lead to any thing satisfactory.

“ For,” added the Prince, “ this F . . . seemed some time back dissatisfied with my continuing here.”

What this will lead to, I am not able to see at present. I wish I could but give a hint to Baron F . . . to be upon his guard, for if Biondello conspires against him, he must fall a sacrifice to his plans.

Several

Several days after.

BIONDELLO every day puts more and more confidence in me, and it is, in all probability, because I communicate to him, with the gréatest accuracy, all that I hear and see ; but you'll understand, I tell him only those things which he ought to know.—I seem to keep no secret from him. He often listens with the gréatest patience to the ridiculous nonsense with which I endeavour to entertain him ; and he generally compliments me upon my talents, and good conduct in trusting to him with such sincerity. Indeed, the method I have taken is the best way to insure his countenance. But he is mistaken in my character, notwithstanding the accurate knowledge he possesses of mankind. In every conversation I distinguish more and more what an
opinion

opinion he has of me ; indeed he begins to give me little commissions, but which at present do not consist of any thing farther than to have a watchful eye, in his absence, upon the Prince's conduct, and to communicate to him all what I have perceived and heard. And, to enable me to do this effectually, he takes care that every little new trait in my character is reported in a favourable manner to the Prince, who becomes every day more and more attached to me, and prefers me to all his other servants ; indeed he has of late appeared very suspicious of them, which is, in all probability, a contrivance of Biondello's, in whom he puts the most unlimited confidence.

That I should succeed so well, and in so short a time, I did not imagine ; it exceeds my most sanguine expectations. I will set it down as one of my
 1 great

great master-pieces of art, if I am able to outwit this Biondello.

A certain Marquis, by name Civitella, has just left the Prince. I have often seen him here. I question whether he seeks any thing beyond the honour of the Prince's friendship. They seem very intimately acquainted, and indeed I cannot blame the Prince for that ; for this Marquis has many good qualities, and seems to study to display them to advantage in the presence of the Prince. However, I have heard the Prince many times promise to pay him money ; and, from what I could collect, it is not a small sum.—Then the Prince is in debt—it cannot be otherwise, from his present extravagance.—But how are they to be paid, when I know, for certain, that he receives nothing from his court? Is not this a diabolical plan of the Armenian,
to

to detain him, and succeed in his designs upon him? I advise you, friend, to provide yourself with money, which may be had immediately upon your orders. I leave it entirely to your prudence, how you will accomplish this necessary object without betraying yourself.

I must tell you of a discovery which I have just made, and which I think of consequence :—The Prince generally goes out towards evening, and this happens very often ; and, to day I hear, he belongs to a certain society, called the Bucentauro. Could you not learn something about this sect ; and whether we must also direct our attention to that. He was scarcely gone, when I hastened to my room to write to you. I had just finished the last line as Biondello came in. I must tell you that he does not suspect any thing
when

when he finds me engaged in writing. I have told him that I have a great delight in making verses, and on that account I have always a poem lying at my side, which, as soon as I hear any person coming, I put in the place of the letter; and, to play my part well, I affect to translate it to him, (for he does not understand English) and repeat the most stupid nonsense with a kind of poetic mania. This time he had not a desire to hear my poetry, but intreated me to defer reading it to a future opportunity, and go with him to his room; so that he might be present when the Prince arrived. This I did, and I was obliged to report to him all that had happened to the Prince during his absence. When we were in the height of our conversation, there came into the room an old man. He was bent low beneath his years; but there was an expression in his countenance

which ill accorded with his age. His voice also was full and regular, and he had not that trembling pronunciation which generally affects aged people. Biondello told me that he was his relation. I was going to absent myself, but he entreated me to stay; as his cousin, he said, did not understand any other language than the Venetian, and as, besides, he had nothing of consequence to communicate to him. The old man looked at me with suspicion, but I busied myself with a book, and took no notice of him.

“Do you know for certain that he does not understand us?” said he. “Are you sure that he is not an impostor?”

Biondello told him he need not be under any apprehension.—He described my character to him, and said, that in
spite

of my stupidity he could make me of service to him.

"I will believe you," he exclaimed, "for I am acquainted with your talent in the knowledge of mankind, and which makes you worthy of your dangerous employment. The greater part of the fabric, which I have curiously raised, rests upon your shoulders. Do not loose, for heaven's sake, at the moment of its accomplishment, that firmness which will prevent our being buried in the ruins. I know your caution and foresight are very great. Think also on the reward you will gain, when we behold your giant work completed. I expect letters from . . . and we are then at the summit of our wishes; for the Prince will not make any resistance."

"The journey then, which you undertook, has been of great service?"

"Is there any thing impossible? Had I not found great difficulties in persuading the Court of . . . d . . . to agree in our plans, the mountains, which now appear before us, should long ago have disappeared. I did not mistrust you, believe me. Though it were so, I should forgive you; for how could you be able to penetrate into my schemes?—You believed that many things were the effect of chance, which I contrived and put into execution.—Can you suppose that the Prince of . . . d . . . came to Venice for nothing?"

"No one can possibly imagine what steps your prudence takes."

"You must know then, that he came hither at my request, to entice
2 our

our Prince to a licentious manner of living, and to bring him, by that means, nearer to the point on which my plans are centered."

" Pardon me, when you could so easily have communicated with the Court upon the conduct of the Prince, why was that journey necessary?"

" Is it not easier to remove a Prince from the place where it is likely his penetrating eyes would have pried into our designs, than to make thousands privy to our plans. I had only to write to the Prince to come, for we had settled it some time ago.—I knew he was a member of the order of . . . I am one of them. I wrote to the superiors of the order, and they contrived to send messages to him, which made him believe he was invited to see the internal part of the sanctuary."

“ I am astonished! As often as I see you, you always appear to me in a new and extraordinary character: hear then farther. The second step was not difficult for me to take. The Count P . . . is first minister at the Court of . . . d . . . For appearance sake, the feeble King wears the crown, but P . . . governs: he is the machine by which every thing is regulated. This P . . . has long been my friend. I was acquainted with him whilst he was ambassador at Rome, and I proposed him for a member of the order of . . . At that time, the sketch of the plan, which we are now about to execute, was shewn to him, and which was always the same, although accident has changed the persons by whom it was to have been accomplished. I wrote to him that every thing was ready, and we waited for him only to complete it. Nothing was easier for him, than to persuade his avacious monarch

monarch to let out his troops to conquer . . . to which his council had long before directed their attention. P . . . met me at . i . . to bring me the happy account of his success, and the King suspected that he was gone to conclude a promised alliance."

"Do I dream?—Is it possible to play thus with Kings?" replied Biondello.

"I did not expect such a question from you," said the old man. "Do you not know, that one may deceive Kings much easier than other people; because flattery succeeds to a miracle with them; spreading, as it were, a mist before their eyes? And if they are prudent enough to disregard that illusion, we must then give them amusements to which they are attached, and never deprive them of any thing, but

what relates to state affairs, for fear of incurring their displeasure*.”

“ And does not the King of . . d . . know for what purpose he lends his powers ? ”

“ Is the architect obliged to explain his whole design to a mason, who is employed to place stones and execute the work, which probably he would not even then understand ? He works for his daily bread, and if he obtains that, he is satisfied.—Can the King of . . d . . desire more, than the

* I have written every thing down as I found it, and I do not know how far this may be true. But, if I may speak my opinion, it does not appear to me quite certain ; for, I have seen in my life but one King, and he seemed to me so full of wisdom and majesty, (probably the old King of P . . . , Fr. II.) that I would have sworn that his very looks would have awed those that dared to insult him.

acqui-

acquisition of . . . which must be of great value to him, as it is immediately connected with his own territories?—It is the object which he sets his heart upon.—However, to satisfy your curiosity would take up that time in which I hope to hear more important accounts of the Prince.”

Biondello replied: “Every thing is in the same state as when you left us; and I have only here and there added a little where it seemed necessary.” Here Biondello related to him the event of that evening in which the Prince was attacked, and concluded with saying, that he had made use of that circumstance to enrage the Prince more against his Court; for he made him believe, it was certain, that the Court intended to imprison him.

The old man seemed satisfied with that, and immediately replied, "How is he as to his manner of thinking?"

"He approaches more and more to a free-thinker," replied Biondello, "and I am confident but little is wanting to render him such entirely."

"Then," said the old man, "my machines act as successfully as I can wish."

"How! was this also your work? Will a free-thinker believe in apparitions? Will he bend his neck to the yoke of a religion which puts restraint on him, and which it is your opinion he will accept?"

"I see you are very little acquainted with the human heart. To shake a belief, which fundamentally rests upon con-

conviction, is very difficult ; but to guide the opinion of a sceptic is sufficiently easy. This may seem a paradox, but I will prove it to you :—
 Man—let him wear a crown, or the rags of a beggar—wants always a support in trying circumstances ; and if he despairs at all, he sighs after comfort with double anxiety. And what offers to him the wished-for consolation but religion ?—Hence, it is evident, that the religions of those nations who are still, as it may be said, in a state of ignorance, have infinitely more ceremonies than those that are enlightened. The Prince rejected this support, and launched boldly into the gulph of sophistry. The more he meditates upon it, the more it will perplex him. As he sinks beneath inquiry, he will greedily devour any new idea that tends to dissipate the former. And is not the Catholic religion, in which there are

so many saints that he cannot doubt his preservation, exactly calculated for the purpose?"

"How! Do I hear right? Did you not extol the principles of doubt, and yet you called scepticism a tottering fabric? Have you also been converted, and have you found a greater consolation in contemplating the scapulary, than in your former rational way of thinking? Why do you let appearances so often deceive you?—Is not the tool that is used by the mechanic for the most curious purposes, when placed in the hand of a child, a dangerous instrument, with which it innocently wounds itself? Does not solid food affect the feeble stomach, whilst it operates not upon a strong one? And will not a child throw from it the instrument with which it has wounded itself, whilst the artist would not sell it for any price?—

Will

Will not the person of a weak stomach, avoid food that is disagreeable to it, whilst the hungry healthy man enjoys it? But I will argue otherwise.—What is belief, and what is disbelief? Does not the Mahometan think that his belief is founded upon principle and authority, and call the Christian an unbeliever; whilst the latter thinks the same of him? Hence then, we may conclude, that belief depends merely upon conviction, the want of which is disbelief.—This is self-evident.”

“ You think, then, a fundamental belief is that of which we feel convinced, and also that men may entertain different opinions upon the same subject, and yet be called believers.”

“ They both undoubtedly think that they are so.”

“ Is

“ Is not that an argument against you?—If the Prince thinks that his belief is fundamental.—”

“ Then it would be difficult to wean him from it, but he does not think so ?”

“ And yet he adheres to it with firmness, and defends his opinion with the greatest warmth.”

“ Let me ask you one question :—Does conviction always carry with it tranquility of mind ?”

“ I thought that they were inseparable.”

“ And do you find it with the Prince? Have you not often told me, that, when free from dissipation, he was dissatisfied with himself? He is like a child who is pleased with the brightness
of

of a knife, which he throws away as soon as he is hurt by it; he is the invalid whose stomach cannot digest heavy food; who guards against it as soon as he perceives the evil; and then, in order to rid himself as soon as possible of his former disorder, adopts a lighter diet as necessary. The Prince thinks that many of those things are beneath his notice, which men seize upon with so much eagerness, and from which continual reflection, and an unbiassed mind alone can deliver us. And I declare to you, that in a short time, he will believe in spirits and apparitions. I do not know him; I do not know the human heart, if his former bigotted ideas of religion do not return with double force. Must not this consequence obtrude itself upon him as soon as his experience teaches him that apparitions do exist; that his present philosophy could not once make him

him

him disbelieve this, which is the most trifling and unimportant point that a man can doubt of. Would it not much less be able to eradicate that idea from his mind which education, custom, and our own partiality, have concurred to proclaim by an internal voice? Will he not pass from professed free-thinking to the contrary extreme, and thank the man who leads him to it?"

Biondello was silent, and appeared perfectly convinced. The old man rose slowly from his arm chair; Biondello then told him something which I was not able to understand distinctly; but I learned that he was to prepare the machines; for, the day after to-morrow, there was to be a grand feast.

Well, friend, what do you think of this conversation? The least that we can infer from it is, that Biondello is
con-

concerned in the plot against the Prince.

Who can possibly be that old man?—

Is it not merely the gasconade, which is always peculiar to those sort of people, because they by that method keep their underlings (of whom, in all probability, Biondello is one) in an astonishing dread of their power. So that I know not what to think of his making use of the . . . d . . . for the execution of his plan. And for what purpose was this employed? How can it have any reference to the Prince? How does this all agree with . . .?—Ha! I have a thought—What if they intend to create the Prince, King of . . .?—Perhaps this may be the intention of the Court of . . . d . . .—I must confess sincerely, that, at present, all is a perfect mystery to me.

LETTER III.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

October the 4th.

THE Prince is invited to-morrow to a feast, which is given in St. Benedetto, and, as I understand, merely on his account. His whole household (except one) will be present! and who this one should be, is a matter of great dispute. The lot will probably fall to Biondello, because he has pretended for some time to be indisposed. I call it a pretence, because, in my presence, he does not appear so, at least less than when the Prince is present. He will, perhaps, as soon as we are gone, employ his time in the preparation of the machines, of which the old man spoke. His pretended indisposition prevents suspicion, and makes it more probable.

And

And may it not be possible that this banquet is the idea of the old man? I shall have a watchful eye upon him, and, if possible, will remain at home.

October the 5th.

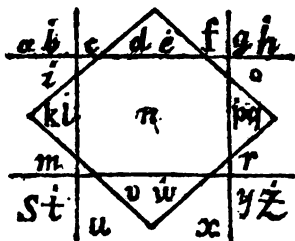
I KNOW not what to make of the Prince to-day. He rose very early, looks pale and haggard, but studiously seeks to hide it; and is dissatisfied if we appear to observe it. It is the same with Baron F. . . and Biondello. They are all silent, but the Prince laughs at them; yet I can observe that his mind is not easy.—Perhaps he has seen an apparition. It is probable, although I cannot discover the truth*.

* The reader knows it already by the relation of Baron F. . . and for that reason I omit the rest here.

Annot. of the Count O . . .

The

The whole house are gone to St. Benedetto, and I am the only inhabitant in this large building. A freezing horror surrounds me. My character, as I informed you, was mistaken by Biondello, and he begged of the Prince to accompany him. I am glad he is not here; for his carelessness has thrown into my hands his pocket-book filled with letters. He left it in his great-coat pocket. It contains, to all appearance, nothing of consequence, but I will not omit to secure any thing that, perhaps, at a future period, may be of great importance. I thought I should discover something more when I found it, but I was deceived, for there were only some little songs, poems, and love-letters. I was about to return it to its place, when I resolved to ransack it once more, and behold I discovered a secret pocket; in which there was the following figure:—



It appeared to me to be the key to some private writing, that may one day or other fall into our hands, and that you will take particular care of it I am confident.

Several of the Prince's household are returned, and in great consternation. It is said the Prince has killed the Marquis Civitella, and is fled. The reason for this rash act I know not. God only knows how this unfortunate affair will end !

THE

THE CONTINUATION OF CONTENT O . . .

AS soon as I had read this, the letter which the Jew gave me for the Armenian came into my mind. I sought it, and found that the figure was indeed the key to the hieroglyphics. I hastened immediately to Lord Seymour, to inform him of this acquisition. We sat ourselves down, and, with that key, very easily unravelled the whole. And to gratify the curiosity of the reader, I shall give the contents of the letter, and join the key to it in the translation.

*Statim, & religionis romæno-catholice est membrum, & regimen * * * accepit, pro nostro etiam habebimus domino, & unum solummodo verbum tunc satisfaciet, ut fiat re vera, & nos — — **

* The remaining characters which the letter contained I omit, because by those already transcribed, the views of the Count O . . . are explained. I shall also here subjoin the English translation.

Note of the German Edition.

“ All that you desired is prepared to the greatest nicety, and inski is chief of the party; a man of great firmness and valour, who is beloved by all. He is satisfied with your promises, and wishes, as we all do, very much that the . . . Prince may become our King. As soon as he has embraced the Roman Catholic religion, and has obtained the . . . crown, we shall immediately look upon him as our regent, and one single word will then be sufficient to make him our sovereign, and us - - - - -

Our

Our surprise at the contents was beyond conception—the execution of the scheme depending merely upon one word too. And what will be the consequence if the Prince should be King of . . . ? The old man said himself, that these were the only means to accomplish the plan—and what could that plan be?—No other than that which would shake monarchies to their foundation, or totally subvert them. And if the Prince should obtain the crown of . . . what would happen—Is there not besides him a successor? Now I perfectly understand the signification of these words, “With yourself succeeds Prince, he is dead.” I now perfectly recollect with what emphasis the Prince repeated those words. (As F . . has written to me) I was seized with horror.

“Friend,” said I to Lord Seymour, “let us not proceed in this business—what
are

are we against so many ; how shall we be able to swim against the stream ?”

“ We will do it as long as our powers last,” he answered me, resolutely ?”

“ Suppose they are detected, and we are involved in the danger ?”

“ Then we shall have the satisfaction of knowing that we have done all that we possibly could do, which will sweeten our hours, whether breathed out in a prison or a palace.”

“ But is it possible, that he can have that consolation, who throws himself through caprice into danger ?”

“ We are not in that situation. — When the lives of thousands, or at least their happiness, is at stake, no danger

is too great to brave, if there is any probability of succeeding."

" And is this the case?

" It is."

" How, friend, can you effectually subvert power? Can you hinder a band of rebels from leading away the thoughts of the Prince, when they are attracted by force? Has he not already done what they at . . . desired him to do? Will not every action now become easy to him, when he considers that he can receive forgiveness of his sins after every wicked deed?"

" Friend, you do not consider that if our plans fail, there is still one left. Have you no idea of the power of the state inquisition here? If we discover only half of what we have heard to be

be true, every thing is lost. Will they not fear, and with justice, that in that secret society are also manufactured plans against the republic; and that they wish the Prince to assist them in the execution of their schemes? You must consider also, that we cannot be detected if we inform through the *Bocche Parlanti**.

* But what will become of the Prince? Gracious Heaven!—If we should be the

* These *Bocche Parlanti* are large lions jaws, of marble; there are many of them to be seen in the Palace of St. Mark. All secret denunciations are put in them, and over every one is written the kind of accusation which you are to deliver. The State Inquisitors examine them every evening, and take into consideration the letters they find in them. By that means it is easy to remain unknown; for he who expects a recompense for his information, detains a piece of it to shew it.

means of forcing the sword of justice to be drawn against him."

"The Prince is excusable—whatever he has done, his rank will be taken into consideration. Punishment is not inflicted with that severity upon men of high birth, as it is upon the meaner class of mankind. But let the worst come—Is it not better that *one* man, even though a Prince—should die for the people, than that multitudes should perish on his account?—And though the mine in its explosion should even shatter us with the rest, from our ashes there will spring flowers which must make future generations revere our memory."

Every one of my objections made the Englishman more firm; and I was at last convinced that he was right, although I suffered much in the encounter. I suppressed my tears with the
hope

hope of a better issue to our plan than that which we supposed ; and fought, as much as I could, to persuade myself of its being practicable, though I acknowledged the feeble foundation upon which it rested. I trusted principally to Johnson's prudence, which was evinced in a great degree by his letters.—With the greatest anxiety I hastened to my lodgings, and read the following letters written by him. Two of them I have omitted entirely, as they did not contain any thing but what has already been related. And if I found in the others what I wished for, the reader will easily discover it.

LETTER VI.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

October the 25th.

SINCE the events which have of late happened to the Prince, he is quite changed. He flies the societies which he formerly sought. — He locks himself up in his room, and appears gloomy and melancholy. I do not wonder at this; but it has taken too strong a hold of him, for I am fearful that he should lay violent hands on himself. — Would you suppose that, under the pretence of being ill, he has sent away the Marquis, who shews so much tender care for him, and is devoted to the completion of his happiness, and who was a little while ago his most intimate friend, And will you believe me when I tell you, that Biondello is
not

not now so frequently about his person, and that his love for solitude is equal to his master's. Necessary as this might be under other circumstances, it now makes me more anxious for him. He has so entirely separated himself from the world, that he seems cold even to his bosom friends: a state of mind by which suicide must be encouraged, and less resolution be required to commit it. That this is already the case with him, I experienced last night. I was alone with him in his room. This happens now very often; for, as soon as it grows dark, he does not like to be alone, he therefore obliges me to be with him, as he believes he can vent his sorrows in my presence, without my being able to understand him, and that I cannot, from stupidity, learn any thing from his gestures. This dread of being alone in the evening, which he was before not accustomed to, gives

me (besides the advantage of observing him,) hopes that he may, perhaps, even yet, adopt other sentiments; for, in my opinion, solitude by candle-light must rather strengthen than alter such a resolution. And I think, that as long as one yet fears something, or which is the same thing, thinks one has something to lose, let it be ever so trifling, which one would not willingly be deprived of, the ties are not entirely severed which unite us to this mortal life.

Now to the business.—I was alone with him one evening, when he rested his head upon his hand, and sat for some time almost without animation. He sighed deeply, and lamented that he had ever been born. At last he rose, and opening his writing-desk, took out of it a red ribbon. He pressed it to his heart and lips. Oh! that
I were

I were able to describe his look. It pierced me to the heart—I will give you, to the best of my recollection, his soliloquy.

“ Oh ! thou only remains of my beloved Theresa ! ” (the name of the Greek lady). He pressed the ribbon to his lips, as the tears burst from his eyes. The stress which he laid upon these words, and his deep sorrow almost deprived me of my senses. I never saw a man in such a terrible situation. His eyes were wildly expressive, and his voice hollow and monotonous. I believed his feelings had almost driven him to insanity. The burthen seemed too heavy for his soul to bear. He remained for some time fixed like a statue :—at last he spoke.

“ My Theresa ! my all ! my
Ah ! how can this miserable earth
afford any relief to my sufferings !—

this pitiable state which cannot produce one single being who is perfectly happy. Which could murder a Theresa! — an angel! — murder! — murder! — murder!” — (This he spoke with dreadful agitation) — “Ha! what prevents me from breaking the bands which separate me from her? — Who can blame the lion that bursts the chains which deprive him of his liberty, and which separates him from his young? But can I find her again! Irrecoverably lost! Irrecoverably! I would seek her through the world, but she is irrecoverably lost! What would I now give for the sweet ideas of eternity, which console so many under their afflictions! What would I not sacrifice, if I knew for a certainty, that man had still a farther destination after his death. I would endure the painful torments of hell, could I hope by that to recover my Theresa. Why was a form so beautiful,

tiful, created to be the food of worms, that prey indiscriminately upon the works of nature?—Oh! thou that dwellest beyond the stars, if thou existest, restore her to me again, and I will believe in thee!—Ha! what is that? What thoughts prey upon my mind?—Shall I then never more forget her? Will she be always united to every idea?—Wilt thou—eternal Being!—give me a hint of thy existence?—Oh! what a sea of doubts and uncertainty! Who can save me from it?—I shake like a reed, which the wind will break. But I will not wait for it—I will prevent it.—I will attain the truth—I will draw back the curtain which hides her from my sight!”

He walked up and down in the room in violent agitation—He did not seem to regard me at all. His eyes glanced upon the ribbon, which he

held fast in his hand. He started with surprise. It was green.

“What is this?”—he exclaimed—
 “Will you tear from me this also, ye invisible powers? I am, perhaps, still to be happy?—Ah!—Ah!—Happy!—(after a pause).—But I have it still—It is, perhaps, the dear shade of my Theresa that is near me, and will administer comfort to my heart—Hope! Oh! without thee there is no comfort left!”

You see, dear Seymour, that he believed the change of the colour was a miracle. If I had dared, it would not have been a difficult task for me to unravel the mystery; for, when I consider that Biondello has a false key to the bureau, the change is easily explained; and should we not suspect such a man of every thing? It was very late, and the Prince did not seem disposed
 to

to retire to rest.—His mind still dwelt upon his beloved.—His soliloquy was a strange mixture of belief and doubt, and both were apparent equally.

“ Yes, it will, it must be so ; with the thread of life, will also be destroyed my piercing torments !” He had scarcely finished the last word, when Biondello rushed into the room, and threw himself at the Prince’s feet.—Alarm and terror were expressive in his countenance, his eyes seemed starting from his head, his hair was dishevelled, and he was half dressed. “ Alas, my gracious Prince !” he at last cried, with a tremulous voice, and pressed himself closer to him.—The Prince was quite embarrassed, and said not a word.

“ Pardon, pardon, gracious Prince !” exclaimed Biondello again.

“ Are

“ Are you mad, Biondello ?” said the Prince. “ Why do you ask my pardon ? What have you committed ?”

“ It would be well if I were mad. — Alas, my gracious, my beloved master !”

The Prince had great difficulty to bring him to his senses. At last he succeeded, and then related his reason for this strange conduct ; after having entreated once more his pardon for what he should relate. The Prince granted it, and he at last began :

“ Since your highness has devoted your hours to solitude, I have led a most miserable life. It is the more painful to me, when I consider that I have lost your affection. It seemed I was no longer worthy of it, nor of the happiness to be with you, gracious Prince !

Prince !—I did not perceive in you any traits of your former humiliation ; but, in its place, I beheld your countenance shadowed by melancholy. I questioned myself from what this could proceed.—I doubted whether, from the effect of the apparitions, or the great losses you had sustained. But you did not reflect upon them at the moment ;—it was from mature deliberation, and when there was nothing to be feared. Sudden and violent sorrow is seldom of long duration ; but that which comes after it is so much the more dangerous, as it takes deeper root, and deprives us of that consolation which we in general treasure up for ourselves. Anxiety for you, gracious Prince, oppressed my soul, disturbed me during the day, and chased away slumber from my eyes.—I had scarcely laid myself down, and offered up a prayer to my Saviour, and all the saints, that they might take
you

you under their protection, when on a sudden I thought I saw a light. I opened my eyes, but I was obliged to shut them immediately. A figure stood before me in the midst of splendor, which blinded me. I could not on that account open them again.—With an agreeable, yet thrilling voice, it spoke as follows :—“Thy master is big with thought, which is supported by his disbelief. He means to fly by suicide into futurity, for which he is not yet prepared. I dared not to appear to him myself. Tell him this, and warn him of the consequences of so rash an act.”

The Prince turned pale, seized Biondello by the collar—“Impostor,” he exclaimed, with a fearful voice, “you have overheard me!”—Senseless he fell upon the ground. I hastened to his assistance ; but the Prince prevented me,

me, and dragged him to an arm-chair. His look was ghastly. It was a long time before he could recover himself, in spite of our endeavours. But as soon as he opened his eyes, he threw himself again at the feet of the Prince, and begged pardon, that he was obliged to say what he did. The Prince repented his intemperance.

“ It is the effect of imagination, Biondello,” said he to him; “ go to bed. To-morrow I will send a physician to you. I forgive your conduct, because it shews your love for me. Be composed on my account, and go to bed.”

“ I have not dreamed, gracious sir, and my fancy has not at all deceived me.—Behold here is the proof of it.”—He put something into the hand of the Prince, who looked at it with astonishment.

“ Yes,

" Yes, it is," he exclaimed, " It is the ring of my Theresa, which I gave her on her birth day.—Oh what a day of happiness was that to me!—But how came it into thy hands? How is that possible?—She took it with her into her grave, I saw it myself!"

" The spirit gave it to me."—
 " Here," said he, after having uttered those dreadful words, " carry this to your master, and tell him that patience and resignation will be his best guide."
 —" He disappeared, and I hastened
 hither."

" Hope and patience conduct us to the end which we desire!—What is this!—If she—It cannot be her—"

At this moment there was a great knocking at our gate; it was opened, and the Marquis Civitella came in.—
 His

His dress, as also his countenance, indicated the greatest embarrassment : from his eyes flashed anxiety and fear. . . He hastened immediately into the Prince's room ; and when he saw him he seemed to be more tranquil.—Can you guess, friend, for what purpose he came hither at such an unusual time ?—He had seen the same apparition as Biondello had ; every word was the same, only that he did not obtain the ring, which the Prince had forced, with great difficulty upon his finger. It is therefore but too true, that he also belongs to the party, and that all this is an invention. I cannot doubt it for a moment. If I were not already a little prepared for their plans, they would have deceived me, so masterly did they act their parts. And I must give myself credit, that I looked upon all this for deceit, and not for fact, so great was their deception. Judge yourself,

by

by that, if it was possible for the Prince to doubt a moment on the subject, and the ring—from whence they obtained that I should like to know. As far as I can learn, the Greek lady is buried in the vault of a church of the convent . . . where no person can obtain an easy access. We must presume then, that there are some monks of the order engaged in the execution of the plan; and even if they knew not any thing of this circumstance, they may have been corrupted by money; which, from the character of the priests, I naturally conclude must have been a considerable sum. Do not laugh at my observation, if it should seem singular to you. I thought it necessary to refute what you said in your last letter;—that the desire of acquiring wealth might probably be the aim of the conspirators. That is certainly not the case; for what sums of money might they
not

not already have spent, which the Prince, in his present situation, never could repay them? And if that was their aim, could they not have obtained it quicker and surer? How you came at present to have such an idea, I cannot comprehend. Do not deceive yourself with the delusive dream of hope: and, for heaven's sake, do not believe that your bank-notes will be sufficient to subvert the plans which are laid for the Prince. Let us make use of them for our own support, whilst we are endeavouring to destroy their views. And that cannot happen until I experience more of the business; for we are not able, at present, to prevent the attacks upon the Prince's religious opinions, unless his good genius should assist us; but we cannot expect that at present. I am not perfectly clear as to the extent of their design. I believed that they wished to make the Prince a mere proselyte;

profelyte; for we already have a number of instances of the kind, and of the tricks made use of by the church, to tear what they call a stray sheep from the claws of the devil. But this seems to me very improbable, for they would have found this an easier task than that which they are pursuing. And what could induce the old man to have said, that he had already sought to bring the Court of . . . d . . . over to his plans, if he did not mean to prove himself a pitiful boaster, which could not have been his intention. But, because I cannot find out their aim, it does not prove that it must necessarily be the desire of acquiring authority. If I was willing to entertain you with more probabilities, I could fill my letter with them. But what am I about? I see that my letter has increased very much, and yet I have not related to you all that my heart wishes, and what it is
necessary

necessary for you to know. You see how clearly I was determined to support my opinion. Have you entirely forgotten that I like to quarrel with you, and that you used to call me, in a joke, the quarrelsome friend? This harangue is sufficient to recal that to your memory.

Civitella staid with us the remainder of the night. They had no idea of retiring to rest; I was therefore obliged to call up the cook, to prepare a meal as quickly as possible*.

* At Venice this is not at all extraordinary; for the desire of eating is (probably on account of the sea air) very great. We seldom see Venetians without having something to eat in their hands. In the city, on every side, you see victuals of all kinds to be sold. Even at the Opera-houses you are frequently interrupted by the noise of sellers of provisions; and in every house at midnight you find victuals preparing.

They

They sat themselves down to the table, but had no appetite. In vain did Civitella endeavour to be witty ; in which he, in general, succeeds very well. The conversation turned upon apparitions, and Civitella now found an opportunity to reproach the Prince for his former coolness towards him. He excused himself, by pleading the state of his mind. Civitella seemed satisfied, but begged of the Prince to follow the methods which he would propose, to eradicate his disorder. His plans were all of such a nature, that he could not help smiling ; and by that means he succeeded, at last, to make the company somewhat merry ; to which the Prince, however, contributed very little, but gave no signs of dissatisfaction. He at last promised to follow the advice of the Marquis, who could not conceal his joy on the occasion.

“ Then, we have you again, my Prince,” he exclaimed in exultation.

“ Do not triumph too soon, Marquis,” said the Prince, “ Will you always be able to find the right means to chase away my gloomy thoughts ?”

“ Always, if you follow my advice, gracious Prince !”

“ You flatter yourself too much.—When you have proved it to my satisfaction I will believe you ; but I fear that you will not succeed so easily as you expect.”

“ Do you know that confidence is half the remedy ?—Above every thing else, likewise, comply with my first request, and rather make yourself acquainted with the corporeal than the spiritual world ; for, although I know, by ex-
VOL. II. M perience

perience, your influence in the latter, I nevertheless cannot help fearing, that the gloom, which is the inseparable attendant upon creatures devoid of flesh and bones, might have a greater effect upon your mind.—But did the apparition, which I beheld this night, appear in consequence of your command, or have I incurred your displeasure by any other means?”

Civitella betrayed great anxiety as he spoke these last words, and the Prince sneered—probably from the association of ideas. The Prince soon resumed his former countenance.

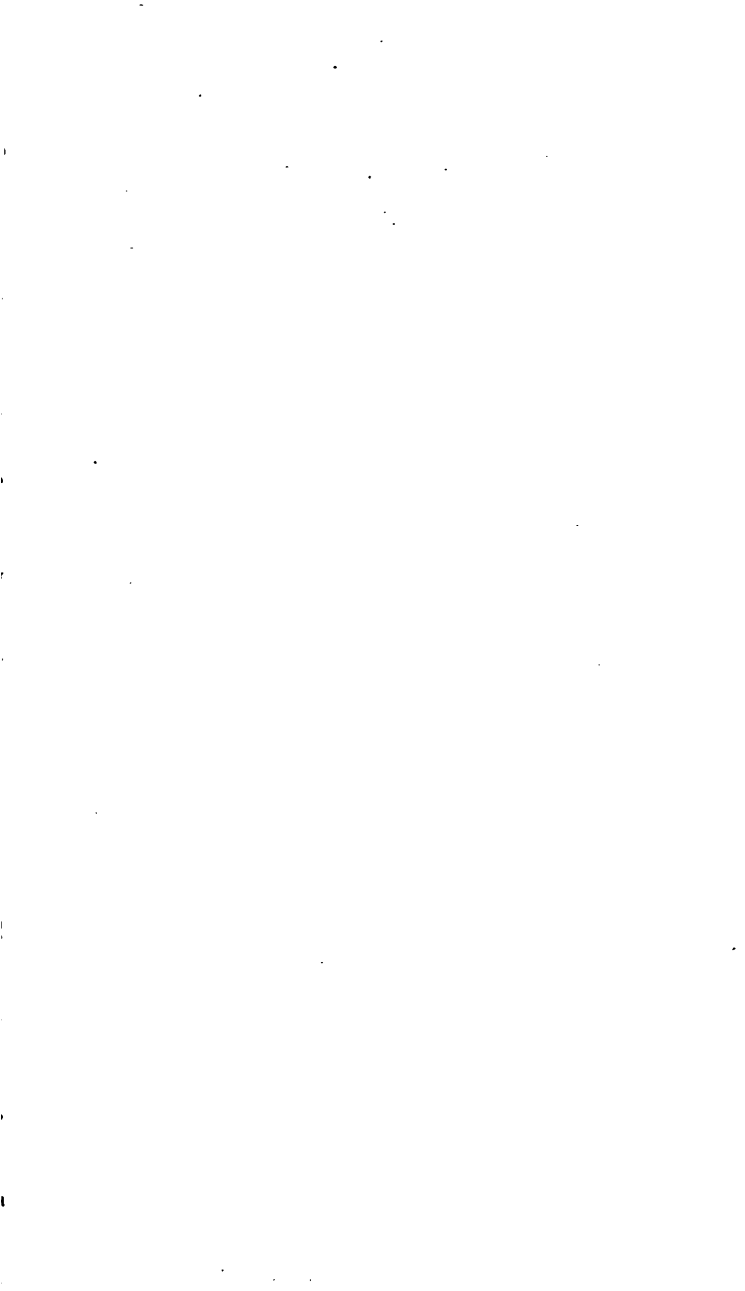
I was obliged now to serve tea, and could not hear the end of the conversation; yet I concluded, from several words which I caught by accident, and from the Prince's countenance, that it had taken a happy turn, and that

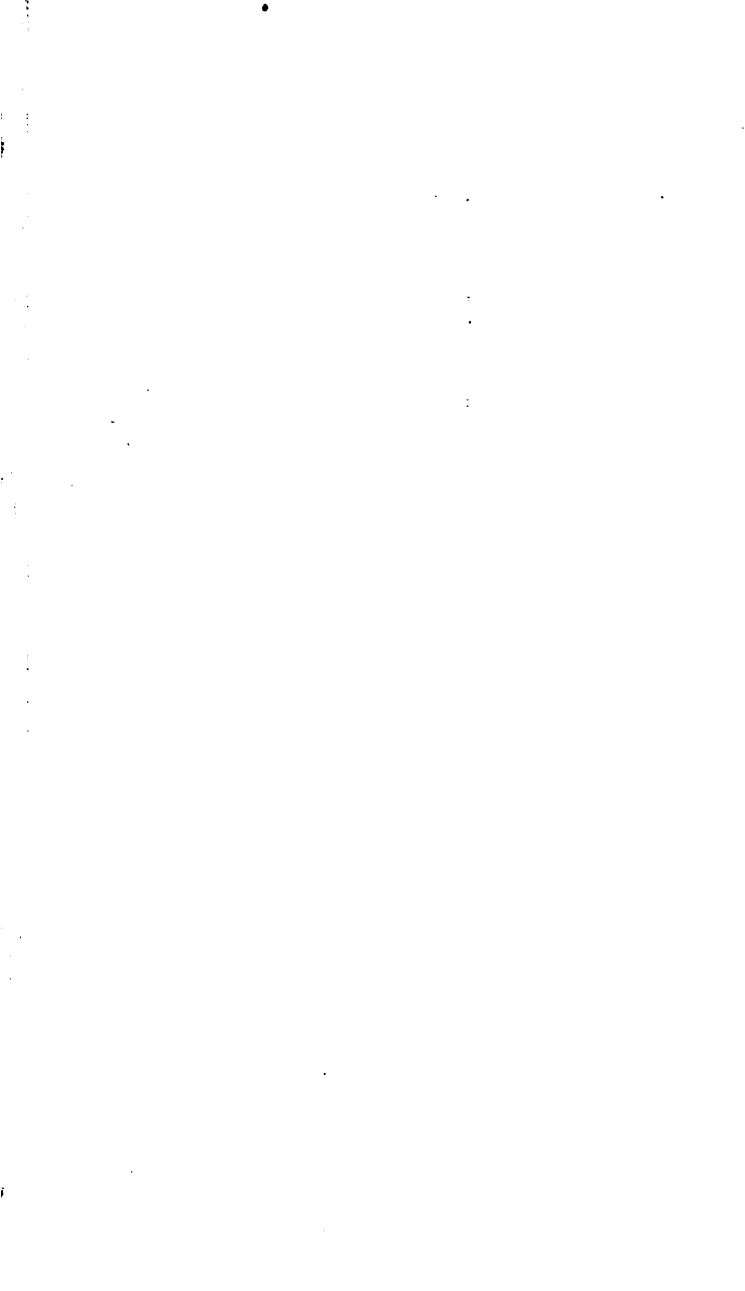
that the entertainment must have ended very well. The midnight hour is past, and although I would willingly chatter with you a little longer, I must finish my letter—I wish for repose.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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